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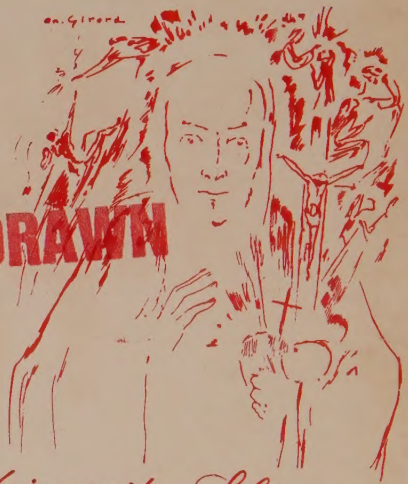

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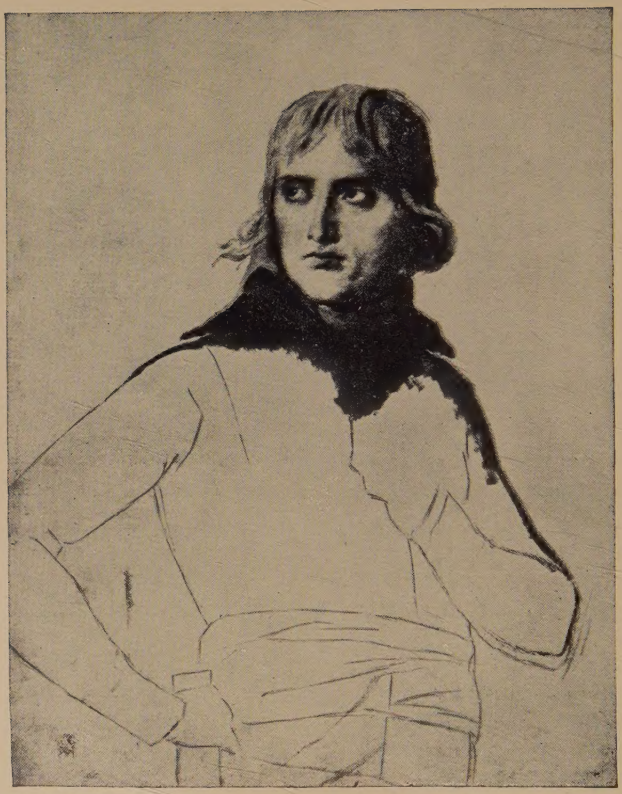

Paris : Bulloz

BONAPARTE AS FIRST CONSUL.
From the picture by David.

[*Frontispiece.*

DOMINATION

BY MARJORIE JOHNSTON

LONDON
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET, W.

First Edition . . . 1930

FOR

MY MOTHER

PREFACE

In the year 1795 Napoleon Bonaparte, a young artillery officer, achieved his first notable success by forcibly subduing an unruly body of the representatives of the people of France. In 1840 the body of the Emperor Napoleon was carried from St. Helena, where it had lain for nineteen years, and was borne to its last resting place in Paris, under the dome of Les Invalides.

Vast crowds attended the funeral ceremonies, and to these the realization that they had fulfilled Napoleon's last command, because he rested now, as he had wished, "by the banks of the Seine, in the midst of the French people whom he had loved so well," brought with it a pang of such vivid remembrance that for a moment they lost all count of time, forgot the wisdom that they had bought so dearly, and only relived the years that lay between 1795 and 1821, vaunting again their triumphs, and shedding new tears for their old sorrows.

Into the following sketches it has been attempted to infuse something of the spirit of those years—the spirit of the man who set himself to dominate a people, and of those people who so courageously surrendered themselves to his domination.

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PROLOGUE

1840

Qui suas laudes appetit aliorum simul appetit utilitates.

BACON.

THE world was pursuing its affairs with vigour and it was pursuing the affairs of men long since dead.

In Italy a society, of which the members designated themselves "Young Italians," had gone back in spirit to the mediæval conception of Anti-Papalism, and were working also for the expulsion of the Austrians from their country. Forty-four years ago General Bonaparte had written: "People of Italy! The French Army advances to break your chains. Our quarrel is with the tyrants who enslave you." In 1840 the people of Italy had said to Charles Albert, "Do you wish to be the first of men or the last of Italian tyrants?"

Such men as Mazzini in Savoy and the brothers Bandiera in Naples and Sicily conspired with secrecy for their object, which was to be the liberation and unification of Italy from the Alps to the sea. Others, such as the Piedmontese Massimo d'Azeglio, publicly exposed the evils of the Papal misgovernment. There was a time when Napoleon had opposed the temporal power of the Pope in saying to

him: "Your Holiness is sovereign of Rome, but I am its Emperor." With greater perception the Tuscan Gino Capponi, the Piedmontese Cesare Balbo, and Pietro Rienzi in Romagna expressed their opinions in writing that it would be better for the ultimate success of their countrymen's revolt to improve their system of education, to promote economic development, to build railways, and to encourage agriculture, industry, and commerce, than to give their minds to the destructive thoughts of immediate rebellion. To-day the Palais des Rois is guarded by the statue of the patriot Victor Emmanuel, but also by the statue of Murat, the innkeeper's son who had become King of Naples, and who in 1814 had pictured to himself a free and united Italy with himself at its head.

The Austrians whom they were endeavouring to expel from their country were themselves heading straight for disaster. In 1840 they refused to see the approach of 1848. The Slavs and Bohemians were steadily drawing away from them; the Hungarians were rising in revolt for their liberty; the Swiss struggled against them for the maintenance of the constitution, first bestowed on them by Napoleon.

Austria permitted herself to be governed by the policies of her evil genius Metternich, and he too often acted in concert with that most sternly conservative autocrat, Nicolas I of Russia. And yet, in 1840, Nicolas himself found cause for dissatisfaction in his country. Entirely against his will, it was inclining itself towards

the ideas of the Western Liberals. He found himself obliged to undertake certain reforms in it—to improve its administration, to codify its laws and to reorganize its tribunals, and, of necessity, he exercised over it a directly beneficial influence. But in Poland, where it was impossible for him to be strongly resisted, he made his hand felt very heavily, and the Poles struggled against him not only for liberty, but for very existence. The peasants fought against the nobility for re-emancipation from the serfdom, from which they had been raised as a result of the Napoleonic campaign of 1807. They had before them the example of the Belgians, who had successfully revolted from the domination of Holland, and who, by raising the cry of "Imitons les Parisiens!" had eventually gained universal recognition of their independence.

Prussia had not neglected to secure some profit from unhappy Poland, but in 1840 her newly crowned sovereign, Frederick William, was occupied with other things. He was occupied with the organization and consolidation of the various elements that had been introduced into his empire in 1815, and with the endeavour to find some peaceable settlement between the Catholic and Protestant subjects who had then been brought into contact with one another.

In Spain, men were working for the benefits of Parliamentary reform, and for the maintenance of the democratic constitution of 1837, which had been given to the nation in 1812.

England, since 1815, had accomplished for

herself a revolution that had been practically bloodless. She had enlarged her ancient constitution to fit the needs of a new generation. She had introduced the system of penny postage; she had established workhouses and Unions; the Bill for Catholic Emancipation had been passed; and the Government had accepted the Bill for the emancipation of all slaves found working in British Colonies.

In the midst of this turbulent progressive movement, surrounded—one might say suffocated—by this spirit for active reform, sat Louis Philippe (whose father had been known as Philippe Egalité), now King of France and finding his crown to be as heavy on his head as iron, and as worthless to him as gilt.

He had thought to conciliate himself with all the legitimist sovereigns of Europe by the attitude he had adopted in their affairs. He had expressed himself in favour of the temporal power of the Pope; he had opposed those who were struggling for the liberation of Italy; he had lent no hand to aid the Swiss Liberals, to whom France had formerly pledged herself; he had given Poland to understand that she need look for no help from him in her stand against Russia; he had adopted the ancient French policy of Bourbon supremacy in Spain.

Something else he had done—something that had cost him more than all this. To give satisfaction also to his people at home, he had erased the Bourbon lilies from the windows of his royal carriage.

And what was the result of it?

In 1840 he found himself regarded by the powers of Europe, not as their saviour and peacemaker, but as an alien outsider, as one to be ignored in their conferences, and relegated to an unimportant and ignominious position in their affairs. And he had lost popularity at home. He had given his people peace, and it seemed as if they wanted something more than peace.

Almost fifty years ago, Vergniaud had exclaimed, when despair born of the thought that his existence had been essentially futile had entered into his heart: "My friends, we have killed the tree by pruning it!" Danton—"The Republic will crush them. I see great misfortune about to burst upon France." Desmoulins—"I could not have believed that men could be so cruel and unjust. The monsters who murder me shall not survive me long!" Robespierre—"The Republic is no more, for the brigands triumph"; and Couthon—"Nothing remains for us but death."

Said Louis Philippe, with a world of uncomprehending bitterness, to the France of 1840: "Do they want me to put on again the red cap of revolution?"

I. Camille Desmoulins

The Church of Saint Germain-l'Auxerrois was crowded. All Paris, it would appear, had deserted its homes and come to listen in grave silence to the reading of a burial service.

Paris was attending the funeral not of one man, but of many.

It was the tenth anniversary of the Revolution, and those who had died fighting at the barricades for the sake of what had been their conception of public liberty, and had been buried in various parts of France, had been disinterred and brought here to-day, so that their countrymen might show them that, after ten years, they remembered and appreciated their sacrifice. Their memory recalled the memory of those other men, who fifty years ago had taken liberty for their watchword, and who, thinking that they desired freedom and not realizing that they only wished to live without oppression, had fought with a dreadful, baffled, and uncomprehending passion, to sacrifice each other and themselves. Of these there had been few who had not considered, at the moments of their death, that their countrymen had lost forever that which they had never won.

When the funeral service of these later victims had been read they were carried out of the church, and followed by a slow procession through the streets, until they came to the Place de la Bastille. Here there had been erected on the ancient site of the prison fortress a colossal column of bronze, topped by a gilt figure that represented liberty. Beneath the column vaults had been prepared, and in these the corpses of 1830 were to find their final resting place.

Throughout the hot summer days the workmen of Paris had laboured very hard to get this

construction finished in July. From the balcony of the Louvre, King Louis Philippe had sulkily saluted the coffins as they passed beneath him. On the peacemaker of Europe was forced the remembrance of the bloodshed that had led him to his throne and on the King of France the remembrance of Camille Desmoulins.

II. Napoleon Bonaparte

On the morning of December 15th, when Paris attended the funeral festivities of Napoleon, whose body had been brought from St. Helena for the occasion, Victor Hugo stood among the crowd, in the Avenue des Champs-Elysées, and awaited the passing of the funeral cortège.

It was bitterly cold that morning and the sky was overcast. The thermometers registered 40 degrees and many of the rivers round Paris were frozen. All along the avenue scaffoldings had been erected to enable the spectators to gain a better view of the cortège as it passed.

In addition to the living watchers, there had been placed at intervals along the way great statues of the dead : Ney, Mortier, Macdonald, Charles V, Louis XIV, and Joan of Arc—a strangely mixed and somewhat incongruous company. These had the appearance of marble, but were in reality of plaster. Seen from a distance they were majestic ; near, their defects became apparent: they did not resemble the originals.

Between them stood huge pots of fire intended to be ablaze with light, but unfortunately quenched by the snowflakes which drifted oc-

casionally from the leaden sky. Above their heads, and the heads of the crowd, floated huge lengths of tricolour ribbon.

It was twelve o'clock.

Save for the streets through which the procession was to pass, Paris was a deserted city. The shops had their shutters down ; men were in doubt whether to act with the solemnity proper to a funeral or with the gaiety becoming a hero's return from exile. The Polish emigrants had sent a special petition asking to be allowed to assist in some way at the funeral of Napoleon. In an official declaration to their king, the French people had said : " He was the legitimate sovereign of our country." From the top of the finely decorated Arc de Triomphe a great statue of the Emperor regarded the city with imperturbability.

Many people had been in their places since daybreak, and from the vast waiting crowd a continual beating sound could be heard, as they stamped their feet on the wooden planks of their stand to keep them warm. From time to time a military band gave forth a funeral fanfare, which was listened to with impatience, as it might drown the eagerly awaited sound of horses hoofs that would tell of the approach of the cortège. When the bandsmen had done their duty they disappeared behind the crowd, to reappear at cabarets that were open elsewhere in the town.

All eyes were turned towards the corner of the Quai d'Orsay.

At half-past twelve there came into view a double file of horse-grenadiers—the Gendarmerie of the Seine. The cortège approached.

We are reminded that we are in the month of Austerlitz. A man wearing a blue blouse attempted to climb on to the scaffolding at the risk of breaking his neck ; a man wearing white gloves saw him, but made no movement to help him.

The Gendarmes were followed by the Municipal Guard of Paris, and after them came the three military schools, followed by the infantry and artillery in battle order. Many of the ancients looked cold, as they had been kept waiting for some hours before the start of the procession in a Grecian temple a hundred feet high, whose walls were open to four winds.

The coloured flames from the tripods surrounding this erection had given out no heat.

After them followed the National Guard, and, because they were on horseback, loud sniggers arose from the crowd at their approach. Remarks were heard such as—" Look at that old General ! How fat he is ! and what a queer way he rides ! " and the sniggers broke into a shout of laughter when one of them dropped his hat and had perforce to gallop on without it.

They were followed by the carriage of the Chaplain of *La Belle Poule*, the ship that had brought Napoleon's remains from St. Helena, and that of the St. Helena Commission. Each of these carriages was drawn by four horses. After them came the eighty-six non-commissioned

officers of the Legion, carrying the flags of the eighty-six departments ; and then a white horse made its appearance. It was covered in violet crêpe and was ridden by the Chamberlain in a suit of blue and silver ; it was led by two valets wearing the livery of the Emperor ; on its back it carried the well-worn green and gold saddle that Bonaparte had used at Marengo. Its passing left behind it something like awe in the hearts of the crowd, who whispered to each other, " It is the war-horse of Napoleon ! " Without its trappings it would have been well known to them, as it was in reality an old animal that had taken the part of war-horse at every military funeral held for the past twelve years.

It was followed by the five hundred sailors of *La Belle Poule* and its staff, headed by the Prince de Joinville, who was wearing for the first time the ribbon of the Legion of Honour. If the Prince looked tired, it was little wonder, because in the ship that had carried the coffin and its guardians up the Seine, though its exterior had been very splendid, there had been no beds provided, and he had passed his nights on a table, while his companions had disposed of themselves as best they might, some on the floor and the most fortunate on benches or chairs.

After this, was heralded the approach of the funeral car itself.

As it turned the corner, a long shaft of sunlight broke through the clouds, and people, seeing it, exclaimed :

" It is the sun of Austerlitz ! "

The fires in the tripods were hastily re-kindled and gave out a feeble sputter of flame.

The car was composed of five distinct pieces. Its base was twenty-five feet long and rested on four immense gilt wheels. It was drawn by eight magnificent horses. From a distance it appeared as a mountain of gold ; when it drew near the lines of the pine-wood planks used in its construction might be distinguished. The actual coffin had been placed in the interior of the vehicle and so was invisible to the spectators, while its exact counterpart rested on a richly decorated shield some fifty feet above the ground ; it had been found impossible to raise the original to such a height. The spirit of Napoleon rested strongly over it all. Though dead some twenty years, it was felt that he had been responsible for his funeral decorations.

Amidst dead silence the car passed into the Church of the Invalides.

Here the walls were hung with violet velvet, star studded and gold fringed, and the pillars were completely enshrouded in velvet, embroidered in gold bees. Beneath the dome, in place of the tomb not yet built, there was a cenotaph erected in the form of a gilded temple. The coffin was carried now on the shoulders of thirty-two of Napoleon's Old Guard.

King Louis Philippe, who stood surrounded by his great officers of state, stepped forward to receive it. The Prince de Joinville said to him :

" Sire, I present to you the body of the

Emperor Napoleon," and the King replied in the words that had been prepared for him :

" I receive it in the name of France."

He then took from Marshal Soult the sword and, giving it to Bertrand, said to him :

" General, I charge you to lay upon the coffin the glorious sword of the Emperor." And to Gourgaud he said :

" General, I charge you to lay upon the coffin the hat of the Emperor."

When he returned to his place, funeral Mass was celebrated, but Mozart's Requiem, which was performed, was felt to be ineffectual. The coffin was placed at length in the cenotaph.

We have witnessed the ceremony, but our view has been slightly obscured by the figure of Victor Hugo, who has stood in front of us ; and while our vision has been intensified, our judgment has been, in a measure, falsified by the hearing of his comments on it. It would have better befitted the subject could we have witnessed it through the eyes of the blue-bloused enthusiast who risked his neck to get a sight of it. It is probable that he would have taken an extreme pleasure in its magnificence and neglected to have taken note of its absurdities.

CHAPTER I

1795

Good commanders in the wars must be taken, be they never so ambitious. BACON.

THE year 1795, the year which is considered to have seen the close of the French Revolution, found Europe in a state of unsettled disorder. By the treaties of Basel, all the states except England, Austria, and Sardinia had made peace with revolutionary France, and were free to stretch themselves and look about them after their first painful awakening from the long sleep of the eighteenth century. There was a marked tendency among them to go to sleep again, which tendency was quickly—and, to their horror, almost authoritatively—checked by their servants, the peasants, and by their watch-dogs, the soldiers.

In Italy the condition of solid unprogressive peace which had existed unchanged for the last forty years was beginning to be questioned by such men as Alfieri, the fierce denouncer of tyrants, Volta, and other Tuscan political economists.

There was at that time no thought of unity in the country, which was divided into a number of little, proud, futile, independent kingdoms and republics. Nothing was done in them for

the moral improvement or education of the people, but, in spite of that—we will not say because of it—they manifested for the most part an absolutely stolid contentment. With a complacency almost touching, they had considered themselves to be in an extremely advanced state of civilization when, a few years ago, C. Beccaria's pamphlet, *Dei Delitti e delle Pene*, had caused the abolition of torture in their realm. In Austria, as in so many other countries, the progress of the French Revolution had caused an abrupt reaction from the philosophic Liberal ideas formerly entertained by her sovereign, Leopold II. Liberalism in Austria went now by the somewhat slighting name of "Josephism," because of the efforts made in its direction by that disciple of Rousseau, the former Emperor Joseph II, who was born too soon and who, not being aware of this, had died in 1790, broken-hearted at the complete failure of his philosophic plans and theories, which had apparently proved that it was impossible for them to be justified in practice.

It was precisely the same in Russia, where the old Empress Catherine II had found it advisable to change her somewhat too extensive views and shut out from them all spectacles that might eventually prove themselves too cruelly dazzling for eyes that looked at them from under absolutely shadeless crowns. She had also her hands, and perhaps her eyes as well, sufficiently occupied with the affairs of Poland.

By the revolution of the 3rd May, the Poles

had declared the abolition of serfdom, the equality of every citizen before the law, and the establishment of absolute religious toleration. Russia, after a moment's pause to consider the effects of their new constitution, had pronounced it "tyrannous and democratic," and had declared war against its impertinent authors. In 1795 the Poles were still engaged in maintaining a futile, heroic struggle, which, because it had found them unprepared, and because they were no more than simply patriotic, violent men, unlearned in the arts of government, became daily a more desperately fought defence.

Perhaps in one sense they had fared better than the Dutch, because when they had attempted to claim protection from France, she had not been in a position to grant it, while "the patriots" of Holland, when revolting against their rulers, had been obliged to accept it, and had found themselves, in consequence, forced to take part in a war in which they had desired to preserve their neutrality, and which was the means of injuring their commercial relations with other countries and of eventually ruining their trade.

In 1795 Prussia was entering in upon the twelve most disastrous years in her history, which, like the darkest hour, came before the dawn of the German War of Liberation. Her sovereign, Frederick William III, had commenced a rule of personal despotism, the sole justification of which was that it had existed in Prussia for the past seventy years. He had had

no one to assist him in his ill-judged policies and attempted reforms, save a "camarilla" of highly inefficient ministers and statesmen. In 1788 Frederick the Great's freedom of religion and of the Press had been abrogated by royal ordinance; later, a purposeless and expensive war had been perpetrated against Holland; and in 1795 a sort of panic had come upon the King and his indecisive foreign policy that had culminated in an alliance with Austria against republican France, had been abruptly reversed by the treaty of Basel, by which he made a disadvantageous peace with his former enemies and caused Austria, in place of his ally, to become his rival and for a time his unsympathetic superior.

Switzerland was waking into a revolt against the last two centuries, which had seen the growth of an aristocracy and had placed the powers of government in the hands of a small ruling class. The French Revolution had profoundly stirred the Swiss patriots, and, remembering the great peasant revolt of 1603 and the three Tells, they were for a time encouraged to stand out boldly against the tyrannous rule of their various Bernese prince-abbots and prince-bishops.

Spain submitted in 1795 with passive resignation to the rule of Charles IV, the unenlightened despot, his queen, Maria Luisa, and his minister and her paramour, Manuel de Godoy. Between them they were bringing the country to ruin. When the Revolution broke out in

France they had uncompromisingly opposed its ideas, out of a much-vaunted loyalty to the head of their house, Louis XVI. The liberal and beneficial reforms of the king's father, Charles III, had been abandoned, and Charles IV had perpetrated an utterly useless, extravagant, mismanaged war against France, until his wife, objecting solely to the extravagance, which had distressed her by diminishing the royal revenue, brought it to an end by the shameful and shameless treaty of Basel, by which Charles IV made his peace with the country that had " offered an insult to his family " by—figuratively and literally speaking—cutting off its head.

England, on account of her insular position, was less affected by the revolutionary influence which penetrated and disturbed Europe. She was quite definitely opposed to revolutionary France, but at the same time she was aware in herself of several rebellious elements that had declared themselves very much in sympathy with the republicans, and whom it had become impossible to ignore.

The whole continent stood for a moment in a state of perturbation, unrest, and indecision, and, finding itself without guidance and lacking in independent conviction, it turned instinctively towards France, the originator alike of its trouble and its hope, and looked to her for counsel and salvation. The France of 1795 was in no fit position to proffer either.

The whole country at that time, exhausted

by the work of destroying in five years' time the evil erection that it had taken a hundred years to complete, had sunk into a despairing apathy. There was a danger of all that had been gained by the "Declaration of the Rights of Man" being lost. The Revolution had bled itself to death in 1795, and nothing remained of it save a corpse-like republic in which a few disheartened spirits were endeavouring to awake a new life. With a sort of fear they were aware that their efforts had become entirely vain.

The Committee of Public Safety had broken up. The Army was under-fed, ill clothed, unpaid, and despondent. Representative government, despite a vain pretence on the part alike of the governors and the governed, had become lost.

Towards the end of the year one more final and spasmodic effort was made. By the Constitution of the Year III, the Convention established the Directory, composed of five of their number, as the highest executive authority in France, and gave them complete freedom to act for the salvation of their country. They were beyond making the effort. They could do no more than intrigue reasonlessly among themselves, and attempt to keep in favour with the Paris mob ; and even in this last they were not always successful.

There were still in France a number of discontented royalists, and equally discontented extreme republicans. These took the law into their own hands, and, remembering the power

that a mob had invested themselves with in the early days of the Revolution, bound themselves together and on the 13th Vendémiaire (5th October) threatened to attack the Tuileries, where the Convention held its sittings.

The Directors were thrown into a state of confusion and wild consternation. Some were for parleying with the mob, but Barras, their leader, who knew himself to be a poor speaker, suddenly recalled to mind that Napoleon Bonaparte, the artillery officer who had taken Toulon for the Republic, was now in Paris in a state of unemployment. Acting on this inspiration of despair, he appointed him to be the commander of all the troops, and, in his turn, gave him liberty to act.

Bonaparte sent his friend Lieutenant Murat to fetch in all the artillery available from the outlying districts of Paris, planted them in a commanding position midway down the Rue St. Honoré, and cleared the rabble from the streets with a " whiff of grapeshot."

And then he turned to France and stretched out his hand to ask for his reward.

Napoleon Bonaparte

By the action of the 13th Vendémiaire Napoleon Bonaparte was robbed of the individual life that he had cherished for twenty-six years, and was given in its place the life of a generation to cherish or to destroy.

From the moment that he accepted it, his individual life, and with it his individual character

and personality, became lost in the many-sided history of what he attempted to make of it. Actually, in attempting to become everything, he caused himself to become nothing. Taking possession of twenty years' destiny, he became himself a strangely impersonal figure, a thing that in equal truth and sincerity, and with equal discrimination and success, might be admired, slandered, worshipped, ridiculed, deified, envied, believed in, hated, praised, and condemned. For the sake of his purpose, he became at once an unthinking soldier of fortune and an imaginative philosopher, a benefactor of mankind and a usurping tyrant, a scheming and skilled diplomat and a gambler who was merely fortunate, an irreligious atheist and a man full of natural reverence and faith. In regarding him, it was not that every man could look at him through different eyes, but that every man's eyes could fall on him from a different angle.

The consequence of it was, that those who came after him knew so little of him, only because they knew so much. He stood behind the vast creation termed the Napoleonic Era as something responsible for it, and yet so much apart from it that there was nothing in it that could be made an explanation for him. He was indeed responsible for it, for it was the materialization of his grand conception of life.

It was a thing that was only possible while he remained capable of dominating it, as a god dominates his creation. When he became part of it, as he did just before the end, it fell because

it was no longer upheld. It was a thing so hurriedly and imperfectly conceived that it failed to justify its existence in time to save itself from destruction, but as a creation it had in it some very splendid elements.

It is significant that its creator was given no choice of an acceptance or refusal of the task thrust upon him. Without comprehending all that it might entail, he was driven to an acceptance by the force of his own personal and immediate needs

On the 13th Vendémiaire Napoleon Bonaparte thought that he had received command of an army, a post which might prove remunerative, and which would certainly further his immediate interests.

Perhaps an unfair advantage was taken of him, seeing that his only recommendation for the unexpected task that lay before him was the assurance that he "would not stand on ceremony."

CHAPTER II

1796

I know not how, but martial men are given to love.
BACON.

On the 15th November, the battle of Arcola was fought and won by Bonaparte against the Austrians, two months after he had won the victory of Castiglione. Of Pitt's first coalition of 1793, which had consisted of Prussia, Spain, Austria, Great Britain, and some smaller states, only Austria remained now in the field against France, and, though she was still making tremendous efforts to relieve the fortress of Mantua, which the French were besieging, she was practically a conquered Power.

In 1795, by the treaties of Basel, Spain and Prussia had withdrawn from the war; England, left unsupported, could do no more than oppose France on the sea.

On the 16th May, after fighting the closely contested battle of Lodi, the French had entered Milan, and had been received as deliverers. They had taken the utmost advantage of their position as masters of North Italy. The Duke of Parma had paid them an indemnity of 2,000,000 livres, and had perforce made them a present of twenty pictures from his private gallery; the Duke of Modena had given up

JOSEPHINE.
From the design by Isabey.

7,000,000 livres in addition to twenty of his best pictures; and the Pope, whose territory Bonaparte's armies had then threatened, had been obliged to buy him off at the price of 21,000,000 livres, and a hundred of his best pictures and statues. It was on the 27th April, by the treaty of Cherasco, that Sardinia, once an Austrian ally, had been forced to withdraw from the war. By the battles of Mondovi (22nd April), Dego (15th April), and Montenotte (12th April), her armies had been driven back, her capital had been threatened, and she had lost Piedmont.

To accomplish all this had taken Bonaparte just under a year, and his soldiers were filled with enthusiasm for him, and with a sort of wonder at their own hitherto undiscovered prowess. He had taken up his command of them at Nice on the 27th March, just eleven days after he had celebrated his marriage with Marie Tascher de Beauharnais, who was always called Josephine.

I. Josephine

It was necessary for the wife of Napoleon to have certain qualifications, and the woman whom he married on the 16th March, in all ignorance of his future destiny, possessed each of these qualifications to a degree that was little short of miraculous. She was to play the rôle of Empress of France for the space of six years, but she had fitted herself for the part long before the day of her coronation. Glamour was about her whole personality, and yet in herself she was the essence

of reality—a thing completely and utterly of the world.

Fine clothes and jewels delighted her. She knew how to use them to their best advantage; and when the time came for her to assume a crown she astonished even her courtiers by the ease with which she bore it. She was fundamentally adaptable. She completely fulfilled the requirements of her position, because her natural character and inclinations made it easy for her to do so. As queen of a more genuine court she might have been absurd; as queen of the Napoleonic Court she was all that could be desired. She never wearied of its somewhat trying magnificence; she was young enough to find perpetual joy in her imperial title; she was old enough and, it is perhaps permissible to add, experienced enough to be undisturbed by the atmosphere of somewhat coarse intrigue that pervaded it.

Her never-failing tact was her most useful possession: she was the most tactful woman alive. She was foolish, and was subtle enough to realize that, even to herself, her foolishness was unmeasurable; she was careful always to appear just a fraction more foolish than she really was. About things that did not concern her personally, she was not inquisitive. It was a sort of self-sufficient contentment that made one of her ladies say of her that she carried complacency to excess. And yet she was too jealous ever to become uninteresting to, or uninterested in, her husband. Above all, she

was pliable and obedient. She was passionate but no strength lay in her passion ; she made her moments of surrender more attractive by an appearance of being self-willed, but she had in reality no will to govern. There were times when she appeared no more than a very lovely woman, with a kind of inconsequent genius for wrong-doing and for making the most irresistible of apologies. Had she been above yielding to the temptations with which she surrounded herself, she would have become little less than a saint —but she would have ceased to be Josephine. Her intense personal charm, her almost pathetic inability to resist anything that attracted her, her overwhelming love of admiration, made it inevitable that her friends should become her lovers ; there was a certain quality of tolerance and generosity in her that rendered it possible for her lovers to remain her friends.

Her relations with Bonaparte were characterized throughout by the complete ease and lack of corresponding ardour with which she permitted herself to be loved, and by the complete lack of effort with which she retained his affections and held his interest to the last.

When she became Madame Bonaparte, she was thirty-three years of age, her husband being twenty-seven. She possessed then an exquisite, supple figure and a very engaging manner. Her features were not in themselves beautiful ; she needed to conceal their imperfections. Instead she wilfully exploited them, and had added an appearance of character to a face that

at first seemed designed only for frivolous tears and laughter. Her teeth were exceedingly bad, but, as her husband observed, she was so clever that nobody noticed it.

Her talents lay in one direction only, and in that one direction she had numerous opportunities for exercising them. The Director Barras adored her to such an extent that, appreciating Bonaparte's strength as a coming conqueror, he could yield her to him at the proper moment quite becomingly, so that there might be no trace of enmity between them. To Bonaparte she had at first seemed completely unattainable, and that had been for him her chiefest attraction. He wanted her, he attempted to possess her, and when she surrendered herself to him so easily, so unexpectedly, she became more enchanting than when she had held herself aloof. She appealed at once to all that was feeblest and strongest in his nature. He might consider her cold-bloodedly and detachedly: he was terrifically ambitious, devoured by his own half-satisfied cravings for power; the position which she held among men who in their day were considered to be great filled him with a sort of envy, and he was not unreasonable in believing that, when he had taken her for his own, she could use her influence for the accomplishment of his purposes. He was at that time young, and the consciousness of his own youthfulness and inexperience gave him an outward air of diffidence that troubled and annoyed him; the self-possession that was hers,

even when she chose to appear most disconcerted, filled him with an unspoken admiration, and almost unconsciously he yearned for the support that it might give to his own brusque, unstudied awkwardness.

Apart from these things, and more compelling than they, she awoke in him an intensity of passion which he had as yet unsuspected in himself, and which amazed and excited him by its newly revealed possibilities and immensities.

There was a part of his mind that knew her for what she was—a weak, vain, inconstant, jealous, hysterical woman ; there was a part of him that eternally sympathized with her, craved for her, and responded to her.

The fascination which she thus exercised over his first unblunted sensibilities survived throughout all their married life, throughout their numerous quarrels and misunderstandings, their mutual infidelities, their countless outbursts of jealous anger and suspicion and their absurd reconciliations. Its memory lingered with him until the day of his death.

As was natural and inevitable, he outgrew its first overmastering influence : he learned to put before it the importance of his own dynasty ; he schooled himself into putting her from him ; and yet it cost him severe pangs of the heart, not because of the thought that she would suffer, but because of the loss her inspiring, tantalizing companionship was to him.

He made her his wife, and she ceaselessly tormented him ; he made her his empress and

acknowledged that she was superb. He was extraordinarily proud of her, of her looks, her easy charm of manner, and her beautiful clothes. He gave her many presents ; she gave him little in return, and did not sacrifice thereby one shred of his affections. She spent money lavishly and unsparingly and, though she lived in constant terror of meeting the results of her own extravagance, she could not cease to be extravagant. Her creations appalled her husband, as much by their beauty, which was almost terrible in its utter uselessness, as by their costliness. And yet he could not bear to think of Josephine badly dressed and forced to economize. After her death, when he was on Elba, he enquired what was to become of all her magnificent statues and pictures. He was told that they would be sold to pay her accumulated debts.

"It is a pity, for France's sake," he replied with some sorrow, and with the feeling of uncomprehending helplessness with which she had always left him. "I have given her some very beautiful things. I have never ceased to give her a large allowance ; she had no reason to get into debt."

Her life with him had been a series of small deceptions which he had seen through and had been unable to prevent or overcome. He was aware that whenever he asked her a simple question, she immediately and almost mechanically answered "No," in order to gain time to consider a suitable reply.

He remembered her, however, with a sort

of half-painful gratitude, with which the old admiration mingled and persisted. She had illumined his court in the face of all Europe, and, with all her shortcomings, she had conducted herself in a manner that had delighted her contemporaries, and perfectly befitted her age. One would not make the age an excuse for Josephine, but Josephine an excuse for the age.

Madame de Staël said once to Napoleon, " I see that you do not care for women ! "

He replied to the challenge very simply and gravely : " J'aime la mienne."

II. Decrès

Decrès, whom Bonaparte had known very well in Paris, was at Toulon when he heard of his friend's appointment to the command of the army of Italy. When he heard that the General was about to pass through the town, he became very excited, as he wished to be among the first to congratulate him on his good fortune, and to introduce some of his companions to him.

He went to his apartment filled with a joyous eagerness, and we leave him to give his own account of his reception :

" The door was thrown open and I was on the point of rushing to meet him with my wonted familiarity. But his attitude, his look, the tone of his voice deterred me. There was nothing haughty or offensive in his appearance or manner, but the impression he produced was sufficient to prevent me from ever again encroaching upon the distance which separated us."

CHAPTER III

1797

In all the madness of superfluous health,
The trim of pride, the impudence of wealth.

POPE.

ON the 17th October the treaty of Campo Formio was concluded between France and Austria—or, as it would be more correct to say, between Austria and Bonaparte. It was signed practically in defiance of the Directory, who wanted a continuation of the war. Bonaparte, however, doubted if his soldiers could maintain themselves in the heart of Austria, whither the war would inevitably take them, and preferred to take up his stand as the conqueror of Italy, and demand terms without fighting for them.

Austria, doubting, in her turn, whether she could defend Vienna against him, submitted to his conditions, and by doing so made the first of those many undignified and unprofitable compromises by which she was to maintain herself for the next quarter of a century.

The terms of peace had been already arranged in April at the treaty of Leoben. Austria was to cede to France Lombardy and the Belgic provinces; in return she was to receive a part of the Venetian Republic. It was the first time that imperial Austria had joined

with republican France in spoliation of old Europe.

The Directors were not in a position to complain with any effect, or to protest to any purpose: they were dependent on Bonaparte for financial support. He had already sent them more than two million francs from Italy; and the *coup d'état* of 4th September, in the Republican Calendar marked the 18th Fructidor, which had succeeded by force in overthrowing the royalists, had been worked mainly through military alliance, and by the efforts of Bonaparte's lieutenants, Bernadotte and Augereau.

Bonaparte himself did not waste time in considering their wishes. He had his hands full with the reorganization of north Italy.

During his stay at Mombello, he had held what practically amounted to a court. The thing that had most impressed the French diplomatist Miot de Melito, who saw him there, was that he ate like a king, in public: "The inhabitants of the country were admitted to the room in which he was eating, and allowed to gaze at him with a keen curiosity." He had formed what he called the "Cisalpine Republic," which consisted of the states of Piedmont and Lombardy and the Papal territories of Ferrara, Bologna and Ravenna.

It was the complete success of his first independently fought campaign that had enabled him thus to appropriate the Italian states. It would seem as though in this campaign he had determined to set up a model for himself to

follow throughout the rest of his military career. At all events, it had in it all the main characteristics of a Napoleonic war. It was conducted in a series of rapid forced marches and surprise encounters, not according to rule, but to the unerring dictates of true inspiration, and with "the factor chance accounted for with almost mathematical accuracy."

In order to be able to move quickly, the Army carried no baggage. It was dependent on the surrounding country for provisions, and the art of plunder was conducted on a huge scale, and thereby reduced almost to a science. The lack of regular food, the bad clothing of the Army, and the frequency with which it made rapid and prolonged marches caused the death of many soldiers before they had a chance to get a sight of the enemy, but the success which was at first the invariable outcome of such a system caused this somewhat sinister fact to be overlooked.

On the 14th January Bonaparte had been victorious at the brilliantly planned battle of Rivoli, and in February the stubbornly defended fortress of Mantua had capitulated to him. He said—and it is not so much the sentiments that he expressed as the simple frankness with which they were uttered, and the corresponding lack of astonishment with which they were received, that is surprising: "Do you suppose I triumph for the glory of the lawyers of the Directory? Do you suppose I mean to found a republic. What an idea! The nation wants a chief—*a chief covered with glory!*"

I. Thiers

While Bonaparte was conducting his first campaign in Italy, a man who was to occupy a goodly portion of his life in writing his history was born at Marseilles on the 16th April.

On that day, at the house of the locksmith Thiers, the son was born whom his parents christened Adolphe Louis.

Nearly fifty years after this, the son was to become famous for his *Histoire du Consulat et de l'Empire*, which he published in 1845. Thiers was frequently called the "little Napoleon" because of the intense admiration for the Emperor which governed his life, and which sometimes led him to an emulation of his idol that France found indescribably amusing.

II. Generals Macdonald, Augereau, and Lefebvre

Let us take a glimpse at the future aristocracy of Europe.

While General Bonaparte was winning victories for France and glory for himself in Italy, the riots of the 18th Fructidor broke out in Paris, and General Augereau was sent in haste to take command of the three armies which, combined, were known as the Army of the Rhine. He went, taking with him his chief lieutenant, General Lefebvre, and when they arrived at Cologne they met with General Macdonald, then commanding the Army of the North.

These three men were all what they would have termed "good Republican generals,"

though they might have displayed some annoyance had they been classed as soldiers of fortune. By the will of a man as yet scarcely known to them, they were to become respectively Duke of Castiglione, Duke of Dantzig, and Duke of Tarentum.

On the occasion of their meeting, General Macdonald took the opportunity to parade his men before General Augereau : he was very proud of their discipline and general air of smartness. After watching them for some time, Augereau said to him, briskly but with a kindliness that was not to be mistaken for patronage : "I see that these troops have been drilled in the Prussian manner, but I can soon put a stop to that !"

Before the final march past, the soldiers crowded round their new commander. He had a fine figure and wore very grand clothes, and even his short boots were covered with gold embroidery. They were much impressed by his appearance, and Macdonald, who had worn only a plain uniform, was somewhat hurt and held aloof.

During Augereau's stay at Cologne, the theatrical manager of the town came to offer him his choice of a play to be performed in his honour. The General, as has been previously stated, was an excellent republican. After deliberating for some time, he decided that Voltaire's *Death of Cæsar* would be a suitable presentation, and informed the manager of his choice.

The three generals determined to go together and see the play.

There was a man by the name of Trigny, who was Commandant of Cologne and offered them his carriage to drive to the theatre ; the thought in the back of his mind was that they would feel obliged to ask his wife to go with them. Unhappily, they were not susceptible to such a delicately given hint, and when the carriage came they scrambled into it and sat down without a word.

Trigny, from outside, ventured to put in a word for his spouse, and Lefebvre jumped up and stuck his head out of the window.

" What's that you say ? "

Trigny timidly repeated his request.

" Well, you can go to blazes ! " was the reply, bawled out loud enough for the street to hear. " We didn't come here to take your wife out driving ! " and the head was withdrawn.

The carriage rolled on, leaving its unfortunate owners gaping, and arrived at the theatre. Lefebvre was very much excited.

It would be difficult to say precisely what he expected, but the play came up to his expectations. He applauded it loudly, shouting and clapping his hands. He thought that it had been written that very morning in honour of their visit, and kept nudging Macdonald, who sat next him, and exclaiming, " I say ! Where's the chap who wrote this ? Is he here ? "

General Macdonald, who knew that Voltaire had written the piece and who knew, too, that Voltaire was dead, observed that Lefebvre had not the remotest acquaintance with literature.

CHAPTER IV

1798

In cases of great enterprise upon charge and adventure a composition of glorious natures doth put life into business.

BACON.

IN this year General Bonaparte attained the age of twenty-eight.

On the 19th May he set sail from Toulon, in command of some twenty thousand men. It was his intention to conquer Egypt for France, found there a colony which would injure England's commerce with India, gain possession of the Red Sea, set Syria in revolt against its ruler, and consequently bring about its allegiance to him, march on Constantinople and destroy the Turkish Empire, found in its place an empire of which he would be the Constantine, return to Paris by way of Vienna and annihilate in his passing the House of Austria.

I. FOR THE EGYPTIAN ADVENTURE

Bonaparte had designed an enterprise which, when he presented it to them, appeared possible to the wisest heads in France.

There was in his imagination a peculiarly courageous quality which roused courage in the hearts of others, and each detail of his vast undertaking was worked out with such careful

perfection that men who would otherwise have been appalled at the immensity of his ambition became lost in admiration of his patient genius.

Paoli had said to him :

" Oh ! Napoleon, you belong to the age of Plutarch," and he might also have said, " You resemble Plutarch, for out of brave men you would make heroes."

On the part of the brave men there was little reluctance. The gallant Desaix wrote to him :

" I have beheld with great interest the fleet at Corfu. If ever it sails upon those great enterprises of which you have spoken, in pity do not forget me."

There was little likelihood of his being forgotten. The preparations for the success of the Egyptian adventure would have been incomplete without him. He was to prove himself in Egypt as ably as he had done in Germany, and with as much intrepidity. The glare from the desert affected his eyes, so that he suffered very much, until Bonaparte, writing from experience, recommended him to wear a flannel shirt.

Nor was his great friend Kléber forgotten—Kléber, who was one of the greatest commanders, as he was among the greatest administrators of his day. He had owed his entrance to a military school to the timely assistance that he had once rendered two German nobles in a tavern brawl : when Bonaparte abandoned the Army of Egypt, he was to become its commander-in-chief. When the fleet sailed from Toulon on the 29th May, he was as much in ignorance

of that as he was unaware that he was going also to his death at the hand of a fanatical assassin in Cairo.

There sailed also with the Army the exuberant Murat, who was soon to become Bonaparte's brother-in-law, and who was to win renown in the coming campaign. After the battle of Aboukir, Bonaparte, in his proclamation to the Army, made the announcement that the English cannon were to be presented to his cavalry brigade in recognition of its services, and that the guns were to be inscribed with the words "Bataille d'Aboukir," the name of Murat, and the titles of the three regiments of his brigade. And, in his report to the Directory, Bonaparte wrote :

"The winning of the battle, which will have such an influence on the glory of the Republic, is due chiefly to General Murat. I ask you to grant this general the rank of General of Division. His cavalry brigade has achieved the impossible."

True, in the course of the fight Murat received a pistol wound in the jaw, but then he soon found that he could, without difficulty, grow his whiskers long enough to hide the disfiguring mark.

Among the other soldiers who proved by their presence that they were anxious not to be forgotten were Baraguay d'Hilliers, the general from Paris ; the nobly born Comte de Vaubois ; Reynier, the twenty-eight-year-old general from Lausanne, who in 1804 was to displace Bernadotte in command of the Saxon contingent—

those same Saxons who under his leadership behaved so treacherously at Leipzig ; General Dugua, General Drouot, whom Napoleon was to call "Le Sage de la Grande Armée," General Damartin, General Belliard, who in 1814 was to have the strange distinction of being the first man to say to Napoleon, "Paris has capitulated!" General Menou, who so little thought when he embarked that he was to hold command of the entire army after the assassination of Kléber ; and Lannes, soon to be noted as the only man who would dare to "tutoyer" the Emperor Napoleon, who, as a commander of one of Kléber's brigades, was to distinguish himself especially in the retreat from Syria.

There sailed also with the Army, Junot, the young general who had first attracted Bonaparte's favourable notice at the siege of Toulon.

On that occasion Lieutenant Junot had been taking down a despatch and a shell had burst near him scattering earth over his papers. "Good!" he had exclaimed with a sort of gaiety. "The letter is blotted. We had no sand before, and now here we are!"

Though, in all probability, he started with the utmost lightheartedness, Junot's adventures in Egypt were to close with the regrettable and slightly ignominious incident of a duel, fought with a companion over the subject of Bonaparte himself. In the course of the fight Junot received a wound which obliged him to remain in Egypt some time after the rest of his companions had shaken the sand of the detestable

country from off their feet. In 1813 this same Junot was to seek refuge from the accumulated troubles of his existence by successfully throwing himself from a high window, in what has been described as an access of madness. It was said that he had never fully recovered from the effects of a wound in the head that he had received during the Italian campaign.

Bonaparte's chief-of-staff was, on this occasion, to be Berthier, who had already proved himself in the campaign of Italy, and who, it was said, had given up a love affair in which he had involved himself to be of the expedition. The engineers for the campaign were commanded by Caffarelli du Falga, who had already lost a leg in the campaign on the Rhine.

There also sailed with the Army that General Delmas who, in 1803, was to gain notoriety by his remark to Bonaparte, on the completion of the Concordat at Notre Dame: "All that is wanting is the million men who have given their lives to destroy what you are building up."

The ill-fated Villeneuve was Admiral of the Fleet, and little did he foresee the narrow escape from death that awaited him in his flag-ship, the *Guillaume Tell*, placed third from the rear in the French line at the battle of the Nile. In 1806 this same Villeneuve was to find himself possessed of the cold-blooded courage to make diagrams of the position and construction of his heart, to ensure that there could be no mistake when he stabbed himself to death, after his defeat at the battle of Trafalgar. A far different fate awaited

his companions, Vice-Admirals Bruyères, now aged fifty-six and going unwittingly to his death at Aboukir, and the more fortunate Decrès, who was to be Admiral of the Fleet and Minister for War under the Empire.

Nor was the health of the Army neglected. The celebrated surgeon Antoine Dubois sailed with the Fleet, as also did Larrey, soon to be renowned as surgeon-in-chief to the Grand Army. It was of Larrey that Napoleon had said, "He was the best friend of soldiers that I have known." Desgenettes also lent his services with great willingness—Desgenettes, who, at the age of thirty-six, had become doctor-in-chief to the armies of Italy and Egypt, and who was to prove his worth in a heroic fashion at Jaffa, where he inoculated himself with the plague germ, in order to raise the spirits of the soldiers, who had become fearful of it and discouraged.

In the May of 1798 it would seem as though all French talent and genius was desirous of quitting France and seeking its fortune in Egypt. Not only men eager for military glory and renown joined the expedition, but scholars—philosophers, scientists, geologists, mineralogists, mathematicians, and historians—offered their services until their numbers totalled fully a hundred.

They were not all young men these—men who had all to gain and nothing to lose, and who, having seen no more than a score of years, had no conception of the true value of their lives—but men whose names were already known, and whose lives and reputations, having

been worked for and well founded, had become very precious things.

Thus Claude Louis Berthollet, the future author of the *Essai de Statique Chimique*, was a man of fifty; and his firmly established reputation was deserved. It was he who, at the outbreak of the Revolution, when gunpowder was very scarce, had rendered the Government such inestimable service in its search for saltpetre, and who had been one of those chosen to go to Italy and select which of the statues and pictures that were the fruits of General Bonaparte's first campaign were to come to France.

Again, his friend Monge, the inventor of descriptive geometry, who had been with him to Italy, and who was to take, with him, such a prominent part in the work of the Egyptian Institute of Sciences and Arts, was no longer in his first youth; and he was, besides, one who, above all things, knew and appreciated his own worth. On the death of M. Bézout, when he was appointed examiner to the naval candidates and asked to prepare a complete mathematical course for them, he had declined, on the score that, if he did so, he would certainly deprive Mme. Bézout of her sole income, which was derived from the sale of her husband's works.

There sailed also with the fleet from Toulon, Jean Baptiste Joseph Fourier, the tailor's son who had once been accounted too poor and too low-born to become a soldier, and who before he was thirty was to become virtual governor of half Egypt. In this expedition two tasks lay

before him : to write the historical preface to the *Description of Egypt*, and to write the funeral orations of Kléber and Desaix.

And, finally, there was Dolomieu, the mineralogist, who, perhaps, could he have foreseen what was to be the outcome of the Egyptian adventure for him, might have hesitated to embark on it. And yet he was a brave man and well accustomed to danger. He was now forty-eight, but he might have ended his adventurous career at the age of nineteen, when he was condemned to death for killing a man in a duel, had not that sentence been happily commuted to nine months' imprisonment. He had travelled in Spain, in Italy, in Sicily, in the Pyrenees, and in the Alps ; he had made descriptions of the Dolomites, which were called after him ; he had become a member of the Institute, and he was going to Egypt.

Actually he went as far as Cairo, and then, falling sick, was obliged to return to France. The ship in which he made his return was detained at Naples, and the passengers on board were made prisoners. Twenty-one long months Dolomieu passed, clothed in rags, in a dungeon, with only straw for his bed, awaiting the pleasure of the Neapolitan Government. He could not until then discover in himself traces of the fortitude and ingenuity which were to enable him to make a pen from a piece of wood, and use the smoke of his lamp for ink, to inscribe on the margins of his Bible his treatise, *Sur la philosophie minéralogique, et sur l'espèce minérale.*

The 5th March, the day on which in 1801 he was to thank God for his release, made by a special clause in the treaty between France and Naples, had in 1798 no special significance for him.

He was as blind to his future destiny as are all men from their births, and he had that instinct which is implanted in the human race, to be aware, and yet completely unafraid, of his own blindness. He might have reflected at the outset of this adventure that whether he lived, or whether he died—for all of them knew that some must die—he would be in glorious company. It was unfortunate for this company that when they struggled against a horde of furious, terror-stricken Arabs, to gain momentary possession of the plague-ridden land of Egypt, they could not be aware that the need for this somewhat too dramatic and ineffectual consolation had been occasioned partly by a praiseworthy ambition on the part of Bonaparte which he expressed later in the well-sounding words: "I do not want my reign to pass and leave a single man of merit unrecognized."

CHAPTER V

1799

As the births of living creatures at first are ill-shapen, so are all innovations, which are the births of time. BACON.

THE *coup d'état* of the 18th Brumaire, by which Bonaparte made himself sole master of France, was an event premeditated, awaited, and expected. There were some that found cause in it for profound apprehension, and some for hopeful anticipation; but none were taken by surprise.

The whole of France knew that the country was being misgoverned. Of the five Directors, Siéyès was the only man of any ability, and his ability was of a very passive kind. Roger Ducos, once a member of the "Plain," the revolutionary section that had never an opinion of its own, but leant always towards the strongest party, had gained his appointment solely through the influence of Barras, who hoped to use him in his designs, as an unresisting and willing tool; Gohier was a man of purpose, but lacked intelligent ability to move with the times—he was the author of the *Mémoires d'un vétéran irréprochable de la République*; Moulins was little more than his unquestioning follower; and Barras, according to Napoleon, was the man who, though he "possessed decent manners" and "knew how to receive people," "had got

into the habit during the discussions of being silent, not expressing any opinions, and then criticizing what his colleagues did." He was also extremely ignorant, his knowledge of history being confined to a certain familiarity with the name of Brutus. Below these men, who were the supreme governors of France, there were the Council of the Ancients, largely under the domination of Lazare Carnot, and the Council of the Five Hundred, composed, so it was stated, of the people's representatives. It was the type of Government that was lacking only a *coup d'état* to overthrow it.

Bonaparte returned from Egypt and landed at Fréjus. In his mind there were already matured plans for the Code Napoléon, which was to alter, improve, and settle the laws of France, the Concordat, which was to re-establish the Roman Catholic religion, and the Consulate, which would place himself at the head of a vast departmental organization, at which, in place of the Council of 1790, each department would be governed by a Prefect, who would be directly responsible to the First Consul. He was greeted on his return with every demonstration of delight. The names of his victories, Aboukir and the Pyramids, were heard on all sides; he was hailed as the conqueror of Syria; the name of Acre was tactfully left unmentioned, save by a jealous few, who also intimated that there had been two battles of Aboukir, and were desirous of knowing for what reason he had abandoned his army in Egypt, and what he had done with

the Fleet that was to have brought it home. The Abbé Siéyès said none of these things. Instead he artlessly remarked to Bonaparte that the Government stood in need of both a head and a sword.

Bonaparte allied himself with the Moderate Republicans, of whom Siéyès stood at the head.

The other two alternatives before him had been the Royalists, to whom his military rival, Moreau, had given his somewhat dubious support, and the radical Jacobins and Democrats, who, having Barras at their head, had the mob of Paris at their back. Bonaparte explained his decision thus :

" Had I joined the Jacobins, I would have risked nothing. But, having conquered *with* them, it would have been necessary almost immediately to conquer *against* them."

The 18th Brumaire was accomplished with an ease that was almost ridiculous, and, as its authors were wont to observe with pride, without the shedding of a single drop of blood.

Bonaparte was, of course, the first politician since the Revolution to have the unconditional support of the Army, and that gave him an immense advantage over his rivals. Before the day of the 18th he had gone to Lefebvre, the general commanding the guard of the two legislative bodies, and had said to him :

" Lefebvre, will you, one of the pillars of the Republic, suffer it to perish in the hands of these lawyers ? Join with me and assist to save it."

And he had taken from his side a beautiful

Turkish scimitar which he wore, and flung the ribbon over Lefebvre's neck :

" Accept this sword, which I wore at the Pyramids. I give it to you as a mark of my esteem and confidence."

Lefebvre, though confused at receiving the gift, and embarrassed at having to frame a reply to the appeal so elegantly expressed by Bonaparte, had been very clear as to his intentions :

" Yes," he had said with an air of unmistakable satisfaction, " let us throw the lawyers into the river."

The 18th Brumaire

The morning of the 9th November (the 18th Brumaire) dawned very brightly, and at an early hour Bonaparte was up and had dressed himself.

He had invited a large number of friends to breakfast with him, and, as there was not room for them all in his little house, some of them had to stand outside in the street. They gave him to understand that they did not object to it, and he, being grateful to them for having accepted his invitation, hastened to assure them that it would not be for long. Presently a messenger brought him a despatch, which, when he opened it, proved to be the Decree from the Senate giving him the supreme command of all the troops of Paris. Reflecting that his work with Lazare Carnot had been well done, he stepped out on to the balcony and said to his friends assembled below :

" Gentlemen, will you help me to save the Republic ? "

Rightly discerning from his attitude and countenance that the Republic was in imminent danger, they made haste to assure him that they were ready to give their lives for it. He then came down from his house and mounted his horse. Putting himself at the head of his troops, he said :

" Forward ! We are going to the Tuileries ! "

Arrived there, Bonaparte went at once to the Council of the Ancients. He took the oath and then set himself to address them effectively. At the commencement of his speech they opened their hearts to him.

" Gentlemen, you are the wisdom of the nation. To you it belongs to concoct measures for the safety of the Republic."

Thinking it time to sound the more personal note, he proceeded smoothly :

" I have come surrounded by my generals to offer you my support. Faithfully will I fulfil the task you have entrusted to me."

At the phrase " surrounded by my generals," a muttered whisper, of which the words caught his ear, " Cæsar " and " Cromwell," threw him into consternation. He continued hurriedly :

" Let us not look into the past for precedent. Nothing in history resembles the eighteenth century." And then with the most perfect truth, " Nothing in the eighteenth century resembles the present moment."

There was a pause, broken by the entrance of

the resigned Directors Siéyès and Roger Ducos. At the same moment Barras' resignation was put into his hand. There was no longer a Directory, as the Constitution of the Year III had laid down that a Directory must be composed of three or more members. Entered then the ex-Directors Moulins and Gohier, under the impression that they were still in power.

They were soon undeceived.

For a moment they stood together, troubled and undecided, and then Gohier, facing the Council, said :

" Aided by my colleague Moulins, I do not despair of saving the Republic."

Accompanied by his colleague Moulins, he was calmly placed under arrest and conducted to the Luxembourg, where he found that his jailor was Moreau, the former Royalist defender, who was receiving in payment the command of the Army of the Rhine.

The Council of the Five Hundred, the people's representatives, was expected to make trouble. They were on the verge of a stormy debate when Lucien Bonaparte, their President, rose up and read a decree in which they were requested to remove to St. Cloud. There could be no objection raised. The thing was perfectly in order. No debate took place that day.

Bonaparte returned to his home and passed the night in conference with his friends.

It was Siéyès' idea to arrest forty members of the Five Hundred from whom he expected rebellion. Bonaparte said to him very grandly :

" I pledged my word this morning to protect the national representatives. I will not this evening violate my oath," and he subsided.

The next morning the General set out for St. Cloud. His orders were that anyone attempting to harangue the troops in his absence was to be cut down immediately.

He went first to the Council of the Ancients and proceeded to address them.

Meanwhile in the Five Hundred all was confusion. The members were endeavouring to persuade Lucien Bonaparte to bring in and sign a decree of outlawry on his brother. Persuasion first and then force. Bonaparte was sent for. He hurried in, followed by several grenadiers. Cries arose : " Death to the traitor ! " " Treason ! " and " Death ! " and he retired pale and trembling with mortification.

Murat, acting under orders, simply took his soldiers, and, entering the hall, cleared out the Deputies in a very few minutes. They escaped through the windows and out into the garden beyond. An officer said to Bonaparte :

" Shall we fire on them ? "

But he replied with the grandeur of tone that he had maintained throughout the proceedings, " No. It is my wish that no single drop of blood be shed ! "

That same evening there was a meeting of the two legislative bodies which was attended only by the members favourable to him. They voted him to the position of First Consul, and his colleagues, the Second and Third Consuls, were

the Abbé Siéyès and Roger Ducos. Had he wished to become a Director, it would have been impossible, for the Constitution of the Year III had stated very clearly that no man could become a Director who was not forty years of age, and he was just ten years too young.

The Republic was dead. One might say that it had been buried alive. Those who had befriended it gathered together at a small and, of necessity, exclusive supper party to mourn for it. The Abbé Siéyès said :

" Gentlemen, the Republic is no more. It died to-day. I have this day conversed with a man who is not only a great general, but who is himself capable of everything, and who knows everything. He wants no councillors, no assistants. Politics, laws, the art of governing, are as familiar to him as the manner of commanding an army. He is young and determined. The Republic is finished."

" But," said his neighbour, in a valiant attempt to recapture the lost spirit of the old days, " if he becomes a tyrant, we must call to our aid the dagger of Brutus."

" My friend," rejoined Siéyès, " we should then fall into the hands of the Bourbons, which would be still worse."

Paris: Bulloz

INSTALLATION OF THE COUNCIL OF STATE AT THE PETIT LUXEMBOURG.

From a painting by Couder

CHAPTER VI

1800

Revenge is a kind of wild justice.
BACON.

IN the summer of 1800 the Austrians were besieging Genoa, endangering not only the advanced French frontier in North Italy, but, as the road from Genoa along the Riviera to Nice is the only way into France that is easy of access, the natural frontier of the Alps.

The garrison at Genoa, under the command of General Masséna, held out, braving starvation, until Bonaparte, crossing the Alps, after the inspired fashion of Hannibal, fell on the unsuspecting Austrian army and annihilated it at Marengo on the 14th June.

After the Austrians had again met with defeat at the hands of General Moreau in December at the battle of Hohenlinden, the war would have been carried into Austria itself had not the First Consul preferred to make peace in terms that were pre-eminently advantageous to France. It was one of his boasts that he had never failed after a battle to press for peace.

I. A PEASANT'S GOOD FORTUNE

When Bonaparte crossed the Alps with the Army, his mule was led by a young peasant to whom his identity was unknown.

The youth must evidently have found in him a sympathetic listener, for he unburdened his heart to him, and told him a very pretty love story. He said that he loved, and that his affection was reciprocated. The maid was fair, virtuous, and thrifty, all, in fact, that a model wife should be; but—and here lay all his sorrow—where was the use of thrift when there was no money? He was poor; he had neither house nor land; he could not certainly support a family; and here he and his sweetheart were to be kept apart, and all for the lack of a few gold pieces . . . it was very sad. . . .

If ever he interrupted his tale, it was only to remark on the peculiar silence maintained by the traveller whose mule he led.

When Bonaparte dismissed him, he gave him, in addition to his fee, a piece of paper on which he had written a few lines, and which he directed him to give to the Administrator of the Army on the other side.

It was only when he had delivered the message that the peasant learned that it was the First Consul whom he had conducted through the mountains, and that by means of this note General Bonaparte had given him a house and a field, so that within a little time all his ambitions might be fulfilled and his lover's dreams realized. . . .

It cost Bonaparte only a few strokes of his pen to ensure this man his happiness, but to lead ten thousand men to their deaths cost him an infinite amount of labour and thought.

II. Desaix

Bonaparte once said : " I know that I have no real friends."

But it is to be remarked that he did not make this observation until after 1800. The realization that it was impossible for him to have a friend could not but harden, even while it strengthened, his character.

Friendship is among the most precious blessings that heaven can bestow on a man, and it is a blessing that is peculiarly his. A woman can love with a love that is capable of all things, and she can worship, but it is difficult—one might say it is impossible—for her either to have or to be a friend. Friendship is less vital but more pleasant than love ; it makes for tolerance and generosity, neither of which are factors essential to love ; it fosters a spirit either of protection or confidence, compassion or admiration, all of which lift a man out of himself, and that apart from the happiness given by the easy companionship and conversation of a close friend. Between two friends there should be no jealousy : if it exists, the bond between them has become either something more or something less than that of true friendship. Bonaparte had gained supreme command of France, and he intended to guard his power by war. Among those to whom he looked for help was Desaix, one of the ablest generals of the day, whom he had met in Italy, and to whom he had given a certain measure of his love. His character accorded with that of Bonaparte to perfection.

Both men were young, Bonaparte being thirty-one, Desaix barely thirty. Both were ambitious, and each had an ability that saved his ambition from appearing ludicrous or unfounded. Bonaparte, though of necessity lawless in himself, had a deep and fundamental regard for the law that was in accordance with his detestation of disorder, and in Egypt Desaix had been called by a native appellation that means "The Just." Desaix gave evidence of that selfless courage which had roused Bonaparte to admiration of the ancient Greek heroes.

"He is cast," he said, "in the heroic mould of antiquity."

Bonaparte once gave a singularly expressive proof of the affection that he entertained for Desaix. It was at a dinner party, given just before the 18th Brumaire, on which he intended to make himself master of France. Among those who attended, with whom he particularly desired to find favour, was the Director Gohier.

The conversation turned on the subject of the turquoise brooches used by the Orientals to clasp their turbans. Bonaparte got up suddenly and went to a drawer, from which he took two very fine examples. One he gave to the Director Gohier, from whom he expected so much; the other he gave to Desaix, from whom he could expect nothing more than he had already given.

Bonaparte would have wished to make Desaix a prince, and he would have rejoiced at it and wished for nothing more.

There was nothing, however, of the prince

in his appearance. His large head, covered by a profusion of long black hair, was too heavy for his thin, small body, though he endeavoured always to carry it well. . . .

On the 14th June, Bonaparte watched the battle of Marengo from a bank beside the high road to Alessandria. He stood very quietly, looking at the tumult that he had let loose, his ears deafened by the terrific noise of the cannon and the sharp continuous crackle of musketry. Whenever a regiment passed by him and the soldiers became aware of his presence, they shouted, "Vive Bonaparte!" Turmoil surrounded his cold, detached, little figure, and at half-past two o'clock the knowledge was forced on him that the battle was lost to him.

He stared unbelievingly at the pebbles at his feet and flicked them with his riding-whip.

Of the twenty thousand men that had gone into action that morning, a bare ten thousand still struggled to hold their own. Over five thousand lay dead, not knowing for what they had died, and, from the burning hayricks and grain fields, angry flames roared over the disaster.

The Austrians advanced. The French commenced to retreat. There was about them still an appearance of order. It became apparent to Bonaparte that, if the Austrian column, now about to fall on the right of the French Army, broke the line and the retreat became a rout, they would be lost. Separated, they were at their enemy's mercy; they would be pursued

and cut down unresistingly. After the battle it was probable that a truce would be called between France and Austria, and a little later the return of the Bourbons to France could be an accomplished fact. The work of the Revolution would be undone, and his own work might never be attempted. He would be regarded as a rebel and in all probability would be treated as such. The conviction must have been borne upon him that his death would save the lives of many, but in his heart he maintained the thought that it was better for the ultimate good of France that he should live to bring them to their deaths, than that he should die to let them live.

He raised his eyes from the contemplation of the pebbles and, turning in the direction of Novi, caught the gleam of Desaix's advancing banners. Some miles away he had heard the cannon, and had immediately marched his division in the direction of the sound. The news became known to the Army.

" Courage ! The reserves are here ! "

There was not a moment to be lost.

Bonaparte and Desaix met—a look of confidence passed between them. Bonaparte had said :

" Desaix is my sheet anchor."

They clasped hands. Bonaparte, extending his arm over the six terrible miles of country before them, said :

" What do you think of the battle ? "

And Desaix replied, laughing :

"I think that this one is lost, but, as it is only three o'clock, you have still time to gain another!"

He sprang to his horse and ordered the immediate advance of his division. His presence had a miraculously reassuring effect on the Army, causing it to be able to assume the offensive.

Marmont, who commanded the artillery, collected his guns, and placed them in battery on the right front. They opened fire on the Austrians, who, astounded at the sudden change in the tactics of their opponents, halted and hesitated.

Bonaparte sent forward the whole front of his Army against them. Desaix came unexpectedly down on the left to take them in flank, and in a moment defeat was turned into victory—victory into defeat.

The Austrian troops, bewildered, endeavoured first to advance, then to defend themselves, then to retreat. They were pursued and perished by thousands.

Marengo was carried, and Italy was recovered, but that night Bonaparte wept, for the body of his friend Desaix had been found among the bodies of the slain.

CHAPTER VII

1801

For there is a time there for every purpose and for every work.
ECCLESIASTES.

1801 was a year of peace for France. It had been secured the previous year by Bonaparte's victory in Italy at Marengo, and Moreau's victory over the Austrians at Hohenlinden. The peace of Lunéville signed between France and Austria stated that the French frontier on the east was to be marked henceforward by the Rhine.

DAVID

In the September of 1801 there was at least one man in Paris who was filled with a pleasurable sense of satisfaction because he had accomplished a certain piece of work, and knew it to be successful.

On the 21st of the month Jacques Louis David completed and made ready for public exhibition his picture entitled "Bonaparte crossing the Alps," and, when he regarded the finished product of his genius, he knew that in his first conception of it he had not deceived himself. There are men who, on completing a work, are teased by a sense of its imperfections; David could step back and admire his own production, with the inspired

detachment from his subject that was his most pronounced characteristic.

He had portrayed the General in an attitude of profound expectation, pointing upwards with his right hand, over the snow-covered mountains towards Italy—and the sun. The long line of his raised arm was accentuated by the movement of his horse, a fierce, magnificent, rearing creature with wild mane and tail all tossed by the wind, and the similarity of poise suggested that an excitement apparent in the figure of the man had communicated itself to the animal. His cloak was blown out before him like a dark banner, he grasped his rein firmly in his gloved hand, and his sword hung at his side. Behind him his soldiers, dragging with them the artillery, toiled up the steepness of a narrow ravine and betrayed in their attitude a certain weariness. The landscape surrounding them was in shadow, but the light from the storm-swept sky shone with a sort of misty brightness upon the figure of Bonaparte. From under his dark, level brows, his eyes looked out, eager, commanding, and purposeful. There was assurance in his poise, heroism in his gesture, triumph in his look, and the stones on the ground were inscribed with his name, together with that of Hannibal.

It was such a picture as could not have been brought into being before the success of Bonaparte's enterprise and its glorious results had become completely assured and known to its creator. It was only after Marengo that its execution was rendered possible.

It was a masterpiece, and as such was received by the people of Paris. Its painter was acclaimed everywhere, alike for his genius and for his noble and patriotic exploitation of it; and he was glad, for the praise and approbation of his fellow-men were as wine to the heart of Jacques Louis David. It had been his original intention to depict the First Consul, sword in hand, at the moment of his triumph on the battle-field, but Bonaparte himself dissuaded him from this, saying that battles were won "not by the sword, but rather by the courage and power of the mind." So the sword had been sheathed, and by the air of strength in repose that was thus given to the figure the whole picture gained tenfold in the essential quality of originality.

The fact that Bonaparte himself had never sat for the picture (the painter's eldest son and, on one occasion, his pupil Gérard having been its models), and the universal knowledge that he had crossed the Alps on no prancing charger, but in sober fashion, on a sure-footed mule, detracted nothing from its success and popularity.

The people heard of its completion and exhibition, paid their francs, crowded in to see it, found that the artist had fittingly realized their own idealistic conception of Bonaparte crossing the Alps, expressed their satisfaction, and were loud in their applause. What was likely to benefit David more immediately and materially was that Bonaparte was pleased with it too. He had a high opinion of David, perhaps because the artist was so easily amenable to

suggestion and so tactfully ready to take a hint. In his own private gallery, David's "Sons of Brutus" found a place, and in the days of his Imperial grandeur and enforcement of a rigid etiquette, the artist was one of the few people who were allowed to take breakfast with him.

He was a strange man, David, and his life supports the theory that every man is born into the world with qualities befitting him for the part he must play in it. The qualities with which David was invested were a fine conceit, an imperturbable humour, artistic sensibilities, and powers of complete detachment, as much from the subjects of his work as from all obligations, moral or otherwise.

He started his life as a painter, with a great love for the classics, his first work, the "Date Obolum Belisario," being followed by "Brutus," "The Death of Socrates," "The Oath of the Horatii," and other such subjects. His style, simple and severe, suited the tastes of his day, and he became Court painter to Louis XVI. It is curious to think that as such he had ample opportunity of seeing Marie Antoinette and of studying her features, in all their youthful pride of beauty, before, in 1793, he made that dreadful sketch of her, going to her execution in a disordered dress, with her hair cut short, her hands fastened behind her back, and her pride still showing in every rigid line of her body, even to the set of her long lower lip.

His next work after gaining this Court appointment was the sketch for his picture, "The Oath

of the Tennis Court." Among the other figures, he represented Robespierre standing with both hands clasped on his breast, to show that he had "two hearts for liberty"; and this picture was mainly instrumental in gaining David his seat in the Convention, where on the 20th January he voted for the death of Louis XVI.

In those days, when nearly every man and woman of note eventually ended their lives under the knife of the guillotine, David, thinking that by a realistic portrayal of celebrities he might himself become celebrated, found it advisable to sit at the window of his house, which overlooked the street, and sketch the victims as they passed him on their way to execution.

In this manner he drew Charlotte Corday going to her death in the scarlet robe of the murderess, which, because of a storm of rain, had become soaked and clung tightly to her beautiful form—the beauty, it was said, was accentuated by the way in which she sat, with her arms perforce dragged back behind her; the Dantonists—Camille Desmoulins, whose fierce, violent movements had torn aside his shirt and exposed his thin chest, Lafayette, calmly dignified and showing himself superior to his misfortunes, and Danton, in all his rude strength, displaying in his attitude the coarse joyous bravado that served him so well even to the steps of the guillotine.

But the whole of David's artistic activities were not confined to these. He designed the bas-reliefs and all the ornamentation of the hall

in which the Convention sat, and it was he who selected what Robespierre should wear at the unhappily ridiculous feast of the Être Suprême : the clothes which might have sat well on Murat sat very ill on Robespierre.

It was not often that David made such a mistake in dramatic representation. His feeling for fine, if completely insincere, effect was never better displayed than on that celebrated occasion towards the end of the Revolution in 1794, when Robespierre, reading his unprinted speech to the Jacobins, made it known that he felt the approach of his own death, and declared that if he thought it would in any way benefit his country he would not hesitate to hasten it. David, leaping to his side, cried out : " And I will drink the hemlock with you ! " thus causing a terrific sensation among those who failed to see that there was about as much likelihood of David's " drinking the hemlock " as of his having any occasion to do so. At length the heads of all those who had brought him fame went down, leaving him with only such men as Barras to paint, and Barras was lacking in dramatic possibilities.

David waited in sure expectation.

In 1797 the young General Bonaparte, of whom he had previously made a somewhat flattering sketch, invited him to accompany him to Egypt. He refused the offer on the score of his years, which, as he said, were advancing, but he continued to keep his eyes on the General Bonaparte to such good purpose that in 1801

he was able to execute his greatest picture of him, without using him as a model. This ensured his success with Bonaparte, who detested the tedium of sitting for his portrait, and success with the First Consul meant success with France.

David was given opportunity to immortalize his name in the two huge canvases, "The Coronation of Josephine" and "The Presentation of the Eagles." There were few men besides he who could have painted that coronation picture with the same sympathy and enthusiasm with which he painted "The Assassination of Marat," or who could have displayed the same show of interest for the destinies alike of Charlotte Corday and of Josephine. At all events, he satisfied Napoleon.

His taste was eminently suitable for designing the Imperial costumes and salons, and he was occasionally also of assistance in theatrical productions. Thus it was the custom for all actors playing the part of Cato to appear wearing red-heeled shoes, but when Talma, the most celebrated of Napoleon's tragedians, took the part, David suggested to him that he should wear sandals, and he, acting on the suggestion, gained more applause than usual.

When the Emperor made a tour of Paris, David almost invariably accompanied him, in order that Napoleon might ask his advice on improvements for the city, and the advice that the artist gave him was founded on the ideas that the Revolutionary Fathers had had for the design of Paris.

There are some lives that show a glorious, though perhaps unintentional, consistency, and thus we read of David's last words before he died. He was an old man, in exile in Brussels, and one of his friends showed him again one of his own pictures. He gazed at it for a long time in silence, then, with something of the old triumphant look : " Only I could have conceived that head of Leonidas."

The part that David had to play in the world was written for him some years before he was born. He had nothing to do but to learn it, and to put in it whatsoever interpretation he liked. Men profited as much by his lack of honour or loyalty as they would have done could he have been the most faithful of mortals. He did the work that was appointed to him, always taking the subject that lay nearest his hand, and re-creating it in his own inimitable fashion, and so he justified his existence.

If we consider for a moment the men who have, consciously or unconsciously, benefited the world by their example, regardless of their individual characters, we shall see that this is not strange. Into this list there would come of necessity the varied names of Judas Iscariot, the Apostle Paul, Nero, St. Francis d'Assissi, Cardinal Wolsey, Hugh Latimer, Marat, and Louis XVI. To every man a work has been assigned, and in each case he has faultlessly carried it out according to the dictates of the character that he has formed for himself. There can never in this world be a soul that is ir-

recoverably lost, because in this world there is no indication of chaos. Its progress is in the happily conceived design of a mind that must of necessity be more powerful than the minds of its creation.

Two perfect instances of an orderly placing of personality: Rouget de Lisle was not born to sing his "Marseillaise" in 1750, nor is Jacques Louis David alive to-day.

CHAPTER VIII

1802

And besides, to speak truth, in base times, active men are of more use than virtuous. BACON.

ON the 2nd August Napoleon Bonaparte was declared First Consul for life and given the liberty to choose his successor at his death: 3,568,185 French people voted in favour of the measure; 9,074 valiant and ineffectual votes were given against it.

Bonaparte marked his success by instituting the Legion of Honour and by drawing up, in what was a perhaps too obvious anticipation, the "Code Napoléon."

The Peace of Amiens concluded for a time his war with England.

FOUCHÉ

One of the first actions by which the First Consul proved his strength was his dismissal of Fouché from his office as Minister of Police, and his offer in return of a seat in the Senate, for which Fouché expressed himself grateful.

Fouché has often been presented as the man whom Napoleon feared. It is strange, then, that he did not either let him continue in office or have him and his influence removed from the country. As it was, he would appear to have

considered the talents of his Minister—Fouché was not a man of genius—and decided that they justified his continued residence in Paris ; and to have considered the leanings of his crooked character and decided that they justified his removal from office. For the rest, he said himself that intrigue was as necessary to Fouché as his daily bread, and that he intrigued everywhere, in all places, in all ways, and with all men ; and it was as good, then, that he should intrigue with royalists, anarchists, or republicans in Paris, as that he should intrigue with foreign countries beyond the borders, and, consequently, beyond the powers of correction, of France.

Accordingly, in August Bonaparte summoned a family council, which was also attended by Cambacérès and Lebrun, and gave out that he had come to the conclusion that the Ministry of Police was a dangerous and useless power : useless as against the royalists, who had now shown themselves to be submissive, and only desirous of rallying round the Government ; dangerous because, as a republican institution, it afforded a refuge for anarchists and assassins ; that it was impolitic to leave so great a power in the hands of a single man, who thus had at his mercy the whole Government machine ; and that it was henceforward to be incorporated with the Ministry of Justice, at the head of which was Regnier. Fouché's own remark on the business was that he was sorry to have been superseded by such a *grosse bête* as Regnier, which remark, if it did nothing else, earned for

Regnier the title for the rest of his life of *le gros juge*.

Fouché continued to remain in Paris and to make himself extremely useful. Usefulness was indeed his most saving, if not his most conspicuous, quality. He proffered Bonaparte advice on all occasions and information on every subject, so greatly superior to that of the police, that in the following year the Ministry of Police was re-established, and in 1809 Napoleon was to be found consulting Fouché on the question of where to house the Pope.

Fouché must be considered always as one of the worst, and yet one of the most characteristic and inevitable, products of his age. His life was a continuous exploitation of all the evils and abuses of his times, and yet it was only the events of those times that had made such men as he in any degree possible.

He was the monk whom the Revolution had unfrocked and to whom, just because he had once been a monk, the Revolution had caused Christianity in all its aspects to appear abominable. A man who has deserted a cause is always more energetic in condemning that cause, and in upholding the rights of the party whose ranks he has joined, than a man whose purpose has remained constant. So it was with St. Paul, and so it was with Fouché.

Not content with merely disavowing Christianity he parodied its rites, in an obscene manner, at Lyons, he ransacked and dismantled its churches, he wished to institute worship of the

goddess of Reason, and over the gates of a cemetery he had inscribed the words : " Death is an eternal sleep."

Again, he was the patriot whom the Revolution had rendered fanatic—the man to whom the Revolution had made it possible to say, perhaps in all sincerity, " the blood of criminals fertilizes the soil of liberty and establishes power on sure foundations," and whom it made blind to the significance of the word " criminals."

He was the revolutionary who was not bold enough, but too shrewd, to perish under the knife of the guillotine. He was the man of '93 who was to be alive in '95 and to have discovered precisely for what reasons his colleagues had perished in '94.

He had witnessed alike the downfall of royalty and royalists, of religion and worshippers, of republic and republicans, of ideals and idealists. He was at once too far-sighted to share in the downfall of any of these things, and too near-sighted to see in them anything save their downfall. He was the man who at the outset of the Revolution denounced his contemporaries for " wavering before the shadow of a king," and who was himself to be ambassador to the brother of that shadow before his life was out. He was the man who had once declared his wish to abolish money, and all the evils surrounding it, and who was found at the end of his life to have accumulated vast riches.

He was the man who, having wished at one time to marry the sister of Robespierre, ended

by being affianced to Alphonsine Gabrielle Ernestine de Castellane-Majastie, the daughter of Henri-Augustin Alphonse, Seigneur de Rians et Trouves.

Disillusionment may breed despair—perhaps pity for the world that must so often be deluded : it is far more likely to breed cynicism. Did not Napoleon say once to a child, " I hope that you may never experience adversity, and then you will not learn to despise your fellow-men " ? Fouché, seeing that the destruction of all that his friends had put their trust in invariably dragged down his friends with it, resolved to place his trust in nothing but himself, and thus was engendered the Fouché that is known to the world to-day.

A man looking in upon himself sees no perfection ; a man who cannot look beyond himself sees only bitterness and imperfection, and for those things no man will sacrifice himself.

Fouché once declared that the intentions of himself and Bonaparte were similar, but that their views and measures were different. In this he was right. For each, according to the manner of his time, lived for himself alone, each sought only his own advancement, and each made patriotism a cloak with which to cover his egotism.

But for Bonaparte to live for himself meant also to live for all that he stood for ; and to seek his own advancement meant of necessity to seek also the advancement of the great body of people at whose head he had placed himself and whose support was essential for him—in a

word, to seek, as he saw it, the advancement of France.

With Fouché all was different. He stood for no one but himself; no one's support was necessary to him save that of his own talents, by which he made his support appear necessary to others; he was answerable to no one, because he was responsible only for himself.

Consequently, he stood alone, and for the man who stands alone, and is desirous to remain standing, only one course is open. He cannot boldly and openly attack his enemies, for he would be quickly crushed by mere weight of numbers; he can only hope to defend himself, by his wits, by ways of guile and intrigue.

And for this defence of his own person, Fouché was a man eminently and fundamentally suitable. His defence was indeed so ably conducted throughout his life that many took it for an attack. But it had none of the exhilarating quality of an attack and all the sombre tones of a continued defence. Fouché was not a happy man.

In his endeavours to protect himself without holding himself aloof from the struggle of his age, he missed everything of its exuberance. Deeply involved in its intricacies, he lost sight of its greatness: the battle of Austerlitz was fought and won by Napoleon: said Fouché, "The victory of Austerlitz has destroyed the old aristocracy; the Boulevard St. Germain no longer conspires."

It was this essential lack of joyousness that

separated Fouché from the other men of his time, and that rendered him more vile than they were ; and it was this that particularly distinguished him from Talleyrand, that incorrigible, iniquitous schemer, whose only saving grace was that he found joy in his own iniquity and so was only half conscious of its destructive qualities. It is a fact worthy of notice, that practically all the men who made their mark during the Napoleonic Era were men who had been young at the time of the Revolution, and who had consequently passed their first, and most impressionable, years of complete independence throughout that period. In 1789 Fouché was twenty-six, and he espoused the Republican cause with real and even sincere fervour.

In 1815 he was in correspondence alike with Louis XVIII and with Napoleon, and he caused the insertion into a proclamation of the words, " The sovereignty resides in the people ; it is the source of power."

It is ridiculous to suggest that Bonaparte was ever in real fear of such a man ; that he mistrusted him and yet was not afraid to use him is evident. The fact that in 1802 he made Fouché a Senator has a greater significance than the fact that he deprived him of his office as Minister of Police ; and the fact that Fouché was glad to be received as a Senator is a great deal more in evidence than the fact that he was angry at being deprived of his office. There is something shameful in the way in which he offered his services ; there is something in-

finitely more shameful in the eagerness with which they were accepted.

Bonaparte said of him: "Fouché is a miscreant of all colours, a priest, a terrorist, and one who took an active part in the many bloody scenes of the Revolution. He is a man who can worm all your secrets out of you with an air of calm unconcern. He is very rich; but his riches have been badly acquired. He never was my confidant. Never did he approach me without bending to the ground. But I never had any esteem for him. I employed him merely as an instrument."

At the same time, the instrument had an occasional way of turning in the hand and proving itself too sharp, and thus the "miscreant's" remark in 1804, "You have just declared yourself head of a life monarchy which has no other basis than your victories and your sword," cut to the quick.

Here is what he is believed to have written himself on the subject of his change of station:

"I found myself in so superior a condition of fortune and consideration that I felt myself to be neither injured nor fallen. My enemies were disconcerted by it. I even acquired, in the Senate, a marked influence over the most honourable of my colleagues, but I was in no way tempted to abuse it. I even refrained from turning it to profit, for I was aware that there were many eyes upon me."

Might not those last few words serve well as Fouché's epitaph?

CHAPTER IX

1803

Quien compra lo que puede, venda lo que le duele.
SPANISH PROVERB.

IN the May of 1803 occurred the rupture between France and England that had been pending since the Peace of Amiens, signed in 1802.

The conditions of that peace had been, among other things, that, while the French were to evacuate Holland, as had been previously arranged at the treaty of Lunéville, the English should evacuate Malta. Neither country fulfilled its conditions, but the fault lay mainly with Bonaparte—or, rather, we should say with Napoleon, as, since the beginning of the year, the First Consul had dropped the use of his surname.

While not anxious for immediate war, he was no more anxious for a continued peace. He held the balance with extreme care, and all too suddenly it tipped.

On the 29th January he had stated publicly :

" It is recognized by Europe that Italy and Holland, as well as Switzerland, are at the disposal of France."

And the statement had met with some comment that was not altogether favourable.

On the 19th February he had arranged the

Act of Mediation for the Swiss, which, while it undoubtedly benefited them to a degree, gave him the right to demand from them a payment of armed force.

Later in the year he was heard to remark somewhat ominously it would now take no more than sixty thousand men to conquer Egypt.

England did not evacuate Malta, but pointed out that "Napoleon" had not evacuated Holland.

He waved that point aside, and drew the attention of his people to the way in which England was fulfilling the conditions of a treaty. The proper amount of shocked contempt was registered, and the relations between the two countries became very strained.

A naval expedition sent out by France was understood to threaten British possessions in India, and at that all pretence of friendship abruptly came to an end.

On the 18th May war was declared, and the First Consul, with the calm audacity which was habitual to him, caused the retention of all English people then to be found in France. At the same time he was displeased. It was not that he disliked the prospect of war, but that his ordered mind disliked the precipitation of a thing that he had not expected for at least another eighteen months. Seeing, however, that there was now no help for it, he assumed the expression of the peacemaker driven to war, and commenced operations on a large scale for the invasion of England.

He had under his command 60,000 men, a larger army than any leader in the history of France had yet had under him, for this particular project. He felt very certain of success, but he knew that the cost of the invasion would be enormous, and he prepared to pay for it. Easily disregarding the Germanic system, he sent large bodies of troops into Hanover and to Taranto in the south-east kingdom of Naples. In addition to guarding the coasts, these forces ensured the payments of the sums which he had demanded from both kingdoms. The sale of Louisiana to the United States brought him in 60,000,000 francs, and even then his means of obtaining funds were not exhausted. In place of armed help which it was his right to claim from Spain, he demanded an annual subsidy of £2,880,000, and through Spain he also threatened Portugal, who found it advisable to pay unresistingly the sums he demanded of her.

The taxation of France was only raised the smallest degree, and for this the French people remembered the First Consul with an astonishing intensity of gratitude.

I. Reunited Irishmen

After the failure in Ireland of Emmet's Rebellion of '98, many Irishmen who had previously been United emigrated to France. In the France of 1803 nothing that could possibly be used to any advantage was wasted. In a trice the exiles found themselves again united

to form Napoleon's "Irish Legion." Like the rest of the Army, the corps had an eagle granted to it, but also each battalion received a green flag bearing a dedicatory inscription and the ever-inspiring words—none the less inspiring because they now appeared in French—"L'Indépendance d'Irlande."

The particular and outstanding merit of this corps was that it was warranted to make any Englishman it came within a mile of furious to the point of madness.

II. M. Fontanes' Speech from the Centre of Civilized Europe

When one remembers that the entire Napoleonic Era lasted no fewer than twenty years, and that Waterloo was not fought until 1815, it is curious to reflect that 1803 was the beginning of the end. Had Bonaparte died in that year the world would have been left with a totally different impression of him from what it has been left with now. He would have been regarded in the light of something heroic, and remembered as something peculiarly, though perhaps dangerously, fine. A great soldier, a great liberator, a great reformer, and a great law-giver; but in all probability it would have also been regretted that he had died before he had time to accomplish any lasting or really effectual work.

As, however, it was given to him to live for eighteen years after this, and to work actively for twelve, he has been denounced—and, it must

be confessed, with a certain degree of truth—as a usurper, a tyrant, and a greedy, egotistical and ambitious ruler. It has also been found impossible to deny that his work, such as it was, was accomplished with an exquisite efficiency almost amounting to perfection. Practically every country that he warred against has found, either directly or indirectly, it has some cause for gratitude to him. It was the tragedy of his own life that he could in no way realize its purpose, or foresee, with any certainty of truth, its stupendous effects. At the end he understood that he had been overcome by the passions which he himself had aroused in his conquerors, but it was that that appeared to him the calamity. He considered that "posterity"—the word of which he made such frequent use—would blame him for it, and strove to justify himself before the world in pages of empty sounding lines. He might have reflected that it is given to no man to read his own epitaph, even if he has spent some years in endeavouring to prepare for himself one that he would consider suitable.

So we say that 1803 was the beginning of the end. It was the first time that revolutionary France had deliberately sought a pretext for war, and it was the first time that Bonaparte had confessed that it was impossible for him to exist without it. Such a confession was in itself a prophecy of inevitable destruction, and of eventual re-creation.

It is a singular fact that in the previous revolutionary wars the leaders of the French

armies had unashamedly urged on their soldiers to the attack by a war-like boasting of their prowess, a declaration of the essential glory of warfare itself, apart from its particular national or political purpose, and an absolutely frank and inspiring promise of loot. The destruction that waited on France from the moment that she became self-conscious, and yet decided to carry on a war on principles of which she had become ashamed, was ushered in by M. Fontanes in his speech to the legislative body, of which he was the President :

" France is ready to cover herself once more with those arms that have conquered Europe. It is not France who will declare war, but she will accept the challenge without fear and will know how to maintain it with energy. Our country has become anew the centre of civilized Europe. England can no longer say that she is defending the indispensable principles of society, menaced to its foundations. It is we who may hold this language if war is rekindled. It is we who shall then have to avenge the right of nations, in repelling the unjust attacks of a Government that negotiates to deceive, that asks for peace to prepare for war, and that signs treaties only to break them.

" If the signal is once given, France will rally by a unanimous movement round the hero whom she admires.

" All the parties whom he keeps in order near him will only dispute who shall manifest the most zeal and courage. All feel the want of

his genius and acknowledge that *he alone can sustain the weight and grandeur of our new destinies.*"

It is evident that from the moment France became aware that a single man could sustain a weight of virtue and grandeur that had become too heavy for a nation, she was lost.

CHAPTER X

1804

Man can tell where first he ship himself; but he
Never can tell where shall his landing be.

R. Herrick.

On the 2nd December Napoleon Bonaparte was crowned Emperor of the French. Pope Pius VII came from Rome to perform the ceremony, but the act of coronation was performed by Napoleon. With his own hand he crowned, first himself, and afterwards his wife Josephine.

The Empire had been proclaimed earlier in the year by the almost unanimous vote of the Senate. The only dissentient voice on that occasion had been that of Carnot, who, in consequence of it, had found it advisable to retire from public life.

Georges Cadoudal

In May the Empire was first proclaimed, and in June Georges Cadoudal, the royalist leader of the Vendéans, was executed with eleven of his companions.

This man, to whom the royalists, in the days of their prosperity, would not have granted a commission, had commanded the rebels in their cause against republicanism, Bonapartism,

MURAT.

(See pages 179–187.)

CADOUDAL.

and imperialism, and, all unwittingly, had been the main factor in destroying it for them.

Georges was the son, it is said, of a miller of Brittany, and he had all the characteristics of the true Breton, including the big round head, from which he took his *nom de guerre*, " La grosse tête ronde." Maulevrier, who saw him when quite a young man, said of him :

" If a cannon ball does not lop off that great round head, it will go far."

It was to be carried bravely, just as far as the basket at the foot of the guillotine.

The leader of the Vendéan rebels was that saddest of all things, a patriot. For if we lived in a world of sorrows, patriotism would yet remain the most tragic thing. It recalls the word " sacrifice," and its meaning is so difficult of comprehension, and so elusive, that its sacrifice is robbed of the essential knowledge of justification. It is a thing impossible to capture, and impossible to escape. It is inevitable ; it is unexpected ; it is at once startling and anticipated, inspiring and destroying—an ideal only tc be realized when it has annihilated itself.

From the beginning it holds out no assurance of a promise to be definitely fulfilled. The young see in it, perhaps, a scope for their ambitions ; the middle-aged look in it for a prospect of service to be faithfully and ungrudgingly given ; to the old it is a word whose meaning is disillusionment.

It is a thing so illogical and so unreasonable that it would be looked upon as the outcome of

a poet's imagination, were it not that it is universal and unalterable. Time, age, sex, nationality, intellect, and birth do not affect it. It can pervade a whole life, governing it, impelling it, and robbing it of its natural joy.

To all who have given their lives for it, genuinely and unshrinkingly, it has brought ruin. Those who have put it from them must ridicule it of necessity, since they cannot deny it; it remains for them a thing to be shunned, feared, and, if possible, lost.

In times of peace it is terrible because it becomes ashamed. It is useless; it has no outlet; it covers itself with an appearance of boastful gaiety, flags, anthems, platitudes, and cheers. In times of war it displays itself first as something magnificent, though inexplicable, and then as something hysterical. It is too powerful for continued exposition. It crushes and breaks. It is imperfect; it is never finished. It will remain to the end a thing incomprehensible, irresistible, futile, compelling, purposeful, unfulfilled, and sorrowful.

Georges Cadoudal was, then, a patriot, and, being a Breton, a patriot not of France, but of Brittany. From his youth he was brought up to be a Catholic and a royalist, and the doctrines of liberty did not penetrate—or, rather, he did not permit them to penetrate—his understanding. He was too far removed from any great position of State to note for himself the ill-effects of the monarchical government, and he did not learn of them directly from any of his companions.

Brittany was, and always had been, in a sense separated from the rest of France. The blessing of intentional benevolence, or the curse of tyranny, bestowed on France by the rule or misrule of her various kings was scarcely remarked in any degree by the Bretons. They were a people apart. They had their own friends, relationships, loyalties, customs, manners, thoughts, and beliefs. They were surrounded by the darkest superstitions. The loveliest streams and fountains in Brittany were haunted for them by the evil spirit of the Korrigan, the beautiful woman who sat by the water, waiting to ensnare them by her wiles of love and then doom them to death because of her.

Their lonely roads and heaths were veritable places of terror because of the things that might be encountered there—things such as the Nains, with their flaming eyes, their sharp, horrible claws, and hoof-like feet. In the ruins of their old castles crept the malignant dwarf figures of the Gorics; and by the side of the rivers a man might be appalled and stricken by the sight of the Night-Washer cleansing in her blood-stained hands the linen of those about to die. Tales were told by the fathers to their children of the Moriochi, the demon thing that was always waiting for them, who had a particular power over young children, and who could assume at will the form of any animal, so that he might pass unknown to his victims.

The bogs, so numerous in Brittany, were peopled by fearful and malevolent beings who

issued from their depths in the shape of great black dogs, and went about the country with ill-intent. The forests were stalked by the were-wolf, its human eyes blazing in its animal's head, doomed to remain a wolf because of the wickedness of its sins and its lust for human flesh. If a man awoke in the night to some unaccustomed sound, he sighed before he slept again, knowing it for the creaking axle-tree of the cart of the Ankou, the dread woman who drove from door to door throughout the land, picking up the souls of the dead. To others, these strange creations would be fanciful things, objects perhaps of interest, perhaps of ridicule, but to the Breton peasant they were a hideous reality, and against the fear that they inspired in him he had nothing to set but his own natural and indomitable courage, and his unshakable faith in the primitive religion of his fathers.

In moments of terror, he took up his gun—and prayed to his God ; in his rare moments of content, he worshipped Him.

Unfortunately, he was apt to regard his king as practically synonymous with his God ; and he regarded them both with equal fear, and with equal reverence, as far-off, powerful, though occasionally and inconsistently ineffectual, beings. Catholicism and royalism were to him two things inseparably united. A royalist who professed atheism or a Catholic republican would have been to him an anomaly, totally beyond the sphere of his comprehension. In this indiscriminating worship, both of a God and

of a king, Georges Cadoudal was a true son of Brittany.

When the Revolution broke out, it was not in his nature to go against the principles and ideals which had hitherto been set before him, and which he had accepted in a spirit of unquestioning simplicity. He made no attempt to do so. He was not ambitious for himself. He determined to devote his life to the royalist cause, and to this determination, despite difficulties, disillusionments, and betrayals, he remained true until the moment of his death. In 1793 he organized a revolt in favour of the King in the Morbihan. It was his first effort, this little revolution, and, having few supporters, it was easily put down ; but Georges remained undaunted by his failure.

He joined the Vendéan army then operating in the north and fought at the battles of Le Mans and Savenay. He returned to Morbihan, and succeeded only in getting himself arrested. He escaped from prison to continue the struggle.

After a time he became the leader of the Vendéans. They found in him a general whose bold courage matched their own : if they were unflinching in their pursuit of an ideal, so also was he ; if they, in warfare against their enemies, knew how to turn to account every rock and tree of the land in which they were born, so also did he ; if they, bigoted and priest-ridden, sacrificed themselves willingly and uselessly for the sake of a cause that they loved with an exaggerated, unyielding passion, so also did he.

There was nothing joyous about the Vendéan War; it was fought sternly, relentlessly, and unmercifully, for a cause that was lost before it was taken up; men fought not against foreign enemies, but against men who were of their own blood and akin to them.

Quarrels between brothers are more bitter than those between friends, and in civil wars men are more cruelly vindictive than they appear in foreign wars. That is because in an international struggle the individual has no choice or opinion. If he goes to fight, he goes instinctively and unthinkingly, without considering what may be the ultimate result of his victory or defeat. While in a civil war every man is a distinct, definite, and thinking partisan. His mind has compared two causes, and he has decided which is to him the right—or perhaps in which lies the greatest hope of gain; and, once he has made his decision and chosen his course, he feels it to be a personal matter, and will battle for it with a more insistent fierceness than he would display in the wider and more impersonal field of foreign warfare.

The Vendéans continued to struggle, with a bravery that was terrible in its utter futility, against forces which, in their blindness, they failed to see had long since overwhelmed them.

In 1800 France, whose revolutionary wars had hitherto been mainly defensive, commenced, under the leadership of Bonaparte, the First Consul, to look forward to the prospect of an offensive campaign. But it was apparent to

Bonaparte that he could not leave France while the little flame of revolt still flickered in La Vendée. True, he could quench it with a breath, but he was not desirous of wasting his breath, and he was not without admiration for those men who had kindled it.

He began to treat with the Vendéan and Chouan leaders, and to offer them security; he made it known to them that if they would submit peaceably to his rule he would reopen their churches and give them back their priests. The Chouans accepted his security, and his promise with regard to the churches won him the alliance of the all-powerful Abbé Bernier.

Cadoudal, unconvinced and incorruptible, refused his terms. Strife was to continue in Brittany as long as he was alive to lead the Bretons. For a time they held out in a spirit of desperate defiance, and then, from very exhaustion, they laid down their arms.

Cadoudal said that if it was impossible for him to remain a general he would become a conspirator. He never for a moment wavered or hesitated. Unable to force France into submission, he determined now almost dispassionately on the assassination of the man who had forced the submission of Brittany.

He was never intended for a conspirator, and he played the part ill.

It was discovered that he was indirectly concerned in Saint-Regent's plot against Bonaparte's life, and he fled to England. He wished

to preserve his own life while he was assured that he could still use it.

In 1803, he returned to France to make his last attempt. In company with General Moreau and several other discontented rebels, he formed a final plot. Its failure was inevitable.

For six months Cadoudal remained in hiding, eluding the watchful police, and at the end of that time he was arrested. It was while he was in prison that the result of his life's endeavour became known to him.

Bonaparte had been elected First Consul for the natural term of his life, and Cadoudal's last escapade had shown him just how short that term might be. He became aware of the extreme precariousness of his position, and confessed himself startled. He saw the necessity of placing himself at once beyond the attack of despairing, fanatical royalists and republicans, and he did not hesitate for an instant. Their desperation must be turned into a consciousness of their impotence. He determined on the proclamation of the French Empire, and on the coronation of himself as Emperor. For the arrested conspirators he determined death. The news of the first decision was widely acclaimed ; the news of the second met with a more grave reception ; there were many to beg for the lives of the accused. Bonaparte was to an extent magnanimous : in several cases—notably that of Moreau—he altered the sentence to one of banishment and exile for life. But for Cadoudal there could be no such forgiveness. In his

imprisonment he showed himself to be as implacable as he had been when at liberty. He was unrepentant ; his opinions remained unchanged ; he was as unswerving in his loyalty to the Bourbon cause, and in his belief in it, as he was bitter in his hatred of all that which was opposed to it. Bonaparte declared himself willing to mitigate his sentence, if Cadoudal would beg his pardon.

Cadoudal refused.

There was nothing then left for Bonaparte, who knew his resolution, but to bring about his execution. He perished with his idols shattered and his faith in them unbroken.

Cadoudal was of the type that it is hard to kill, because it is not afraid to die. In his life he had not looked for personal glory or recognition : while he could make use of it he used it unsparingly ; when he had become convinced of its uselessness, he sacrificed it easily, and with a certain dignity. Pichegru, a fellow-conspirator, strangled himself in prison ; Cadoudal, more courageous and less imaginative, permitted himself to be led to the scaffold. His whole life had been lived just for that one moment.

He was simple-minded and sincere, but he had all the obstinacy that is born of simplicity ; he was single-hearted and devoted, but he was possessed also of that narrow-minded fanaticism that is frequently the outcome of such devotion. He was a man whose powers of endurance were so great that they prevented him from discerning the moment when endurance was unavailing :

when surrender would have bettered his cause, he avowed defiance. He was honest, and was unfortunate in believing others to be the same. In moments of action he was daring ; in council and negotiation he was rash to the point of being ridiculous. He had faith in his God, which could never be absurd ; he coupled it in 1804 with a faith in his king that was insane.

It was his fate to recognize on the scaffold that the whole purpose of his life had been to bring about that thing which he had most desired to prevent : it was he who said :

" We sought to make a king ; we have succeeded in making an Emperor."

CHAPTER XI

1805

Threatening the world with high astounding terms,
And scourging kingdoms with his conquering sword.
CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE.

IN 1805 Napoleon had under his command the finest army that it had ever been his fortune to possess. It consisted of 60,000 men who had received splendid training throughout the year in the north of France, ostensibly for the invasion of England. But it is ever desirable to have a double purpose, so that, if the one fails, there is always the other to be avowed, and hence their abrupt change of march, and the official report of Trafalgar, announcing that, owing to a storm, some ships of the line had been lost. The news came a day after the Austrian General Mack had surrendered to the French, with 30,000 of his men, at Ulm.

The fact that the loss of these ships of the line caused the suicide of Villeneuve, the Admiral commanding the French fleet, passed unheeded amidst the wonder and admiration excited by Napoleon's incredibly rapid march from Boulogne to the Danube, and the campaign of 1805 remained untouched as one of his greatest achievements.

Austria had been one of the alliance formed between England, Sweden, and Russia.

Russia had promised her active help in the war against France, and she had been wise had she awaited its coming, before sending Mack with his 80,000 men unprotected into the Kingdom of Bavaria, then under French control. She thought, however, to steal a march on her enemy while his mind and forces were occupied with his intended descent on England. War with him, she knew, was inevitable. She could not remain inactive and quiescent while he calmly appropriated Italy and commenced making inroads upon Holland. She precipitated it, and prayed for her deliverance from it.

After Mack had been roused from the dream in which he confessed to having been lost, completely taken by surprise and compelled to surrender, the French columns pressed on towards Vienna. The Austrian troops in Italy that might otherwise have covered the city against their advance, were forced by Masséna to retreat and leave the road open to them.

Napoleon entered Vienna, and moved on Brunn, where he very calmly awaited the attack of the now combined Austrian and Russian troops.

He was aware that their numbers far exceeded his own—they had engaged on the field that day 82,050 men—but the knowledge did not disturb him. His dispositions had been carefully made ; in some measure his victory had been assured ; he felt that Europe was in his grasp.

He had prepared for himself a line of retreat towards Bohemia, but he did not think that he would have occasion to make use of it.

On the 2nd December was fought the decisive battle of Austerlitz, at which the French were completely victorious.

The French Army at the Battle of Austerlitz

The French Army of 1805 was a thing matured and perfected. Its soldiers were in excellent spirits, eager for combat, and ostensibly enthusiastic. Many of them were in their prime of life; they had passed through the struggle of the Revolution, and they had endured the many vicissitudes of men accustomed to fight for existence as well as—occasionally instead of—pay. They had emerged from them hardened and experienced, and yet they were young, possessing all the powerful vigour and vitality of youth. They had rested for four years, and a longing to prove themselves once more on a battlefield had arisen in them. For the first time, they fought for an ideal that they could understand. During their first months of warfare under the Republican Government, they had been impelled by the irresistible magic of the word "liberty." It had stood for a dimly comprehended, perhaps totally misconceived idea, which it had become necessary to them to translate for the world. They were no longer soldiers, because they had become apostles.

As such they remained until the moment when

they found that they must protect their liberty with their lives. Then the visionary aspect faded, and reality, no less puzzling and unsatisfying, came and stood in its place. They were fighting in defence of a government system that was represented consecutively, and apparently indiscriminately, by a Vergniaud, a Danton, a Robespierre, and a Barras. It was only the severity and continuity of the wars which made possible their lasting gallantry and enthusiasm, because it left them with little time for serious consideration.

The struggle became quite impersonal. They fought first with ardour for a cause that they imagined unconquerable, then in a spirit of despairing bewilderment, sacrificing themselves for an ideal that they had long lost sight of. And then of a sudden there sounded in their ears, words charged with a new impetuosity, and made acceptable by their tone of bold confidence and assurance :

" Soldiers ! You are hungry and naked. . . . The Government owes you much and can pay you nothing. Your patience and courage in the midst of these rocks are admirable, but they reflect no splendour upon your aims. I come to lead you into the most fertile plains the sun beholds. Rich provinces, opulent cities will soon be at your disposal. There you will find abundant harvests, honour and glory. Soldiers of the Army of Italy, will you fail in courage ? "

The words have become well known, because something of the startling force with which they

first resounded has persisted since the day that they were spoken.

The General Bonaparte found many willing to follow him. His words, vague in themselves, when pronounced by him held out a promise that was definite. In Italy, in Egypt, and through the Alps liberty was forgotten. It would seem as though the soldiers desired only to be recognized as slaves.

Up to the last, however, a certain pretence was maintained. Perhaps they were ashamed to exhibit publicly the amazing inconsistency which could cause them at a word to deny that for which they had so lately given up their lives. Bonaparte was known as the First Consul of the Republic.

On the 2nd December, 1804, this pretence was finally done away with. Napoleon was crowned Emperor of the French, and the ceremonies and celebrations on that occasion were such as were completely suited to the tastes of the Army. It was, of course, natural and very right that they should be so, for Napoleon had designed them himself, and the very title of Emperor was of military origin. The Empire gave to the soldiers a definite ideal. There was nothing elusive in its meaning; it stood for something that the least sensible of them could grasp—riches, conquest and grand display. By its very magnificence it appeared to them lasting. It was not a thing intangible and remote; it touched the imagination of each because to each it held out an individual promise of gain. It

was something at last to fight for, something to be worthy of, something in which the soldiers could take pride.

The Emperor was known to be lavish in his manner of bestowing gifts and rewarding services. Every man who was a soldier felt that he could become a marshal; every man that was a marshal felt that it was in his power to become a prince; they were aware that they were living for a moment in an age which set no limits to their ambition.

So on the night of the 1st December no thought of defeat troubled or darkened their excitement. They had complete confidence in themselves, and the uttermost faith in their commander.

Very late that night the Emperor mounted his horse and rode out to make a last inspection of the troops. His progress across the vast field was marked by the sudden illumination of enormous brilliant lights, for everywhere that the soldiers became aware of his presence among them they seized their straw bedding and kindled it into flame—torches of victory to light him on his way.

He was not unmoved by it. In the days of his own humiliation, the memory of that dark field, with its flaring lights, burning for his glorification, remained with him as a thing that would be always completely unaltered and untouched.

On the morrow he knew that many of the men gathered here by his sole will, and for his sole

purpose, would be maimed and slaughtered. He might reflect that they would have died, whether he had lived or no. He had become accustomed to the knowledge, even as they had done, and it had ceased to trouble him.

He returned to his tent, and shut himself in. The next morning the sun rose early to do him honour, for the 2nd December was the anniversary of his coronation day, and in the evening the long rays fell on the corpses of those who had also risen that morning, and fallen—to do him honour.

Strange, that a man so much applauded in his own sphere, should yet be of so little account in the sphere of some others. Thus the brave Cherubini to him on the occasion of his having failed to admire one of the composer's operas :

"You are doubtless an excellent soldier, General, but you must excuse me if I do not think it necessary to adapt my music to your comprehension."

CHAPTER XII

1806

In military commanders and soldiers, vainglory is an essential point; for as iron sharpens iron, so by glory, one courage sharpeneth another. BACON.

IN 1806 Napoleon defeated Prussia and Saxony, and completely destroyed the Prussian Army at the battles of Jena and Auerstadt. He entered Berlin, and issued from there the Berlin Decrees, intended to close all European ports against English commerce. He made his brother Joseph, King of Naples, and his brother Louis, King of Holland.

I. THE PURSUIT OF THE THREE MARSHALS AFTER JENA

The defeat of the Prussians at Jena was owing to the commanding genius of Napoleon; their defeat at Auerstadt to the persevering courage of Davout, and their final pursuit and annihilation to the daring rivalry and audacity of the three Marshals, Murat, Bernadotte, and Soult.

Bernadotte and Soult in some measure resembled each other. Bernadotte had the greater ambition, Soult the greater ability. The Duke of Wellington, accounted by some to be a judge of such matters, and whose testimony bears at least the quality of honesty, said that in the

Spanish campaign Soult was always where he desired him to be least. There was, however, notwithstanding this talent for military ubiquity, something in Soult of littleness, something almost of insignificance. He was a man overpowered by the magnificence of his surroundings, overwhelmed, perhaps, by the responsibilities of his station. By the use of his services, he was led to positions, where he found situations created that were too vast for him to deal with, while retaining his moral equilibrium.

Like Bernadotte, he had a liking for intrigue, and, finding that in the Army there was little opportunity for him to try his hand at it, he turned towards politics. Having nothing of the cruel skill of Fouché nor the address and adroitness of Talleyrand, he could do no more than follow blindly whatever party happened to be in power, and so suffer himself to be made use of by each in turn, and be indifferently set aside when he was useless. He lacked at once the boldness of Bernadotte and the fearlessness of Murat—the appeal that was as conscious in the one as it was unconscious in the other. Despite his failures in many directions, he outlived many of his more successful contemporaries, and, like all the Napoleonic marshals, he remained inordinately ambitious to the end.

The qualities that were manifested in him were present also in the person of Bernadotte, but in him their aspect was altered by the little touch of greatness that had been put on him, the mark of which he retained throughout his

life, as something completely apart from any nobility of character that he might possess. It was seldom, indeed, that Bernadotte found a situation to overpower him. He was alternately as boastful as became a Gascon, and as submissive as became a Marshal of the Empire. In an astonishing degree, he combined suppleness with resolution, temerity with caution, vanity with purpose. Fickle as a cat, he had at times an appearance of sincerity; ambitious, he was genuinely believed by many to be disinterested. He made friends and enemies with a certain rash impartiality, trusting to his friends to save him from his enemies. Intent on his own advancement, he was quick to render himself incapable of feeling shame. In an age which could raise him to a throne, while sending Cadoudal to the guillotine, he was perhaps wise.

These three men, Murat, Bernadotte, and Soult, held apart from one another by jealousy, but united by common ambition, inspired to endeavour by the highest motive—a true love of glory, but rendered effectual by a more debasing spirit of rivalry—joined in an enterprise that was successful.

After Jena the Prussian Army retreated in confusion to the north and north-west, and from Jena to the shores of the Baltic the three Marshals pursued them in what Napoleon described as an "espèce de chasse"—a sort of hunt.

It lasted for three miraculous weeks.

On the night of the 14th October, the day

on which the battle was fought, the French troops were exhausted, even the indefatigable Murat writing to the Emperor that he was dropping with weariness. On the day of the 15th he commenced the pursuit by falling on the enemy outside Erfurt, capturing supplies and 800 men, forcing the surrender of the 14,000 men within the city, and, finally, getting in touch with the Duke of Weimar's column and pushing between it and that of Prince Hohenlohe to prevent their junction, while making continual prisoners of its rearguard.

Bernadotte, anxious to atone for his shortcomings at Jena and Auerstadt, started his course also on the 15th, and on the 17th was before the town of Halle, which was well fortified and defended by 20,000 men. Unhesitatingly he stormed the place, and forced the Prussians to retreat, leaving behind them 100 guns, 1,000 men killed and 6,000 prisoners.

Napoleon, hearing of it, said, in some astonishment, "Bernadotte stops at nothing"; but added, as a sort of saving qualification: "Some day the Gascon will be caught." After a day's rest, Bernadotte marched from Halle to the River Elbe, which he crossed, after having constructed a bridge for the passage of his troops. On the 22nd he came up with the Duke of Würtemberg's army and destroyed it.

On the 23rd he was pursuing Blücher, while away to the west Soult was hot upon the trail of the Duke of Weimar, and Murat was closing up with Prince Hohenlohe. On the 25th the

fortress of Spandau surrendered to Murat, and on the 27th he came up with Hohenlohe's rear-guard at Prenzlau, and gained the surrender of 16,000 infantry, 6 regiments of cavalry, 60 guns, and 60 standards. He then sent out what were practically reconnoitring parties—General Milhaud with 500 men, and General Lasalle, with 700, at Passewalk. Milhaud's 500 men made 5,000 prisoners, and at Stettin 5,500 prisoners were taken by Lasalle's 700 hussars. When Murat had fulfilled his task of destroying Hohenlohe's army, and when he had successfully headed off Blücher from Pomerania and East Prussia, and compelled him to go towards Lübeck, he proceeded on his victorious way along the Baltic coast.

Bernadotte, who since the capture of Halle had marched 150 miles, and taken 3,000 prisoners, was steadily following Blücher, and at Wertin he was joined by Soult, who, having fulfilled his own mission in the west, was free to lend him any aid he might require. On the 1st November he came up with Blücher's rear-guard, some 12,000 Prussians, and, in spite of having in hand only 6,000 men to bring against them, succeeded in driving them from the field.

On the 5th November, Murat completed his march without opposition, and on that day the three Marshals were together before the city of Lübeck.

Blücher had taken his final refuge.

On the 6th Bernadotte stormed the place, and opened the gates in triumph to Murat and Soult.

II. The Grand Duke of Berg

On the 28th December, Joachim Murat, the son of the innkeeper at La Bastide, rode into Warsaw at the head of the 1st Chasseurs and Beaumont's Brigade.

He made a figure of some magnificence, for the stirrups and bit of his horse were of gold, and it carried a tiger-skin saddle-cloth ; while, for himself, his tunic was ablaze with gold embroidery, his white breeches contrasted well with his scarlet boots, a heavy fur pelisse was slung over one shoulder, not concealing his diamond-hilted scimitar, which was suspended by a jewelled baldrick, and his dark, curling hair was covered by a shako, the ostrich and egret plumes of which were clasped by an enormous diamond brooch. It was to be written in Murat's epitaph that : " He knew how to conquer ; he knew how to rule ; he knew how to die." It might better have been said of him that he knew how to live.

Napoleon said : " Ney and Murat were the two bravest men I have known, but Murat's character was the nobler, for he was generous and frank." It was true. Murat possessed, perhaps unknown to himself, the peculiarly unstudied nobility of a child. " His character," again to quote Napoleon, " was quite original."

He was born in 1767 at Bastide Fortunière, two years before Napoleon made his somewhat inopportune entry into the world. His family had wanted to put him into the Church, but

he had been right in thinking himself unfit to hear confessions, absolve sins, and preach the doctrine of humility ; at least he had not to reproach himself with the fault of hypocrisy. Against their wishes, he became a soldier, and marched away to fight, in a smart green-and-white uniform. That was in 1787. Five years later he was a lieutenant and writing to his brother to tell him of his courage and his military talents. Two short years, and he was a colonel. In 1797 he was a general.

The public papers eulogized him, but his family remained strangely unimpressed. The poor vainglorious Gascon wrote to his brother in a mixture of anger and boastful self-pity : " Six months have passed. Your brother has faced dangers ; he has been wounded, the public papers have praised him, and you remain unaffected alike by my glory and by the perils which may deprive my relatives of me ! "

The Italian campaign in which his services had been employed finished triumphantly, and Murat sailed with Bonaparte to conquer Egypt. The voyage was long ; a strong wind tossed the sea, making Napoleon sick. Murat, with a greater eye for effect, kept by himself, spoke of the heat, and mentioned that his health was not of the best.

On land his health returned. He landed at Alexandria, marched across the desert, fought under the Pyramids, had a special and personal engagement with the Seraskier Said Mustapha Pasha, and cut off two of his fingers. He was

made General of Division and returned to France.

In 1800 he married Caroline Bonaparte and became Governor of Paris. More important still, he became Napoleon's brother-in-law.

His house was now very grand, and he was proud alike of it and of his beautiful wife. Some people were unkind enough to say that her neck was too thick, but at least she could cover it with the string of pearls which her husband bought her, and which cost him 30,000 francs. He had been married in January. In May he was taking part in the campaign against the Austrians ; on 14th June, the day of Marengo, he was leading cavalry charges, galloping at the heads of brigades, waving his beautifully ornamented gold sabre, getting his clothes riddled with bullets and adding fresh glory to his charmed career.

He returned to Paris for a short and brilliant stay, and then received command of the Army of Observation in Italy.

His life here was a somewhat boring affair. He spent his time quarrelling with his military superiors, ordering bear-skins for his soldiers, on the plea that a fierce grenadier's face, surmounted by a foot of fur, would be an object to strike terror into the heart of any foe, selecting military music of an inspiring nature to be played by his bands, and designing banners for his battalions. His leisure hours were occupied in writing endless misspelt letters to his long-suffering brother-in-law, in which he aired his

opinions on war, peace, diplomacy, clothes, conspiracy, and treaties. Napoleon contrived effectively and politely to ignore him.

Murat, in Italy, followed the policy directed by Talleyrand. He closed the ports against the English ; arranged a peaceful settlement with Naples and with the Pope ; formed Tuscany, Modena, Lucca, and Parma into a small stray state, answering to the name of Etruria and governed by Philip V of Spain's grandson, once Duke of Parma, and now Ferdinand I, King of Etruria ; and made sure of the capture and retention of Elba. The official report of his work to the First Consul contains the news that Achille, his first-born, " had cut two teeth."

In 1801 he was nominated Commander-in-Chief of the Army of Italy and took up a grand position at Milan, where he remained for two years. He mixed on equal terms with kings and cardinals, received from them presents and addresses, and lived his life tirelessly until in 1803 he was summoned again to Paris and was made Military Governor of the city.

His life here was one brilliant round of balls, dinners, fêtes, and concerts, and he partook of it with the immense capacity for enjoyment that had been his happiest birthright.

The Duc d'Enghien was murdered on a political pretext ; Murat, as Military Governor of Paris, was perforce a party to the murder. When the news of the execution was brought to him, he took no pains to conceal that he wept.

He pleaded for the life of the Breton rebel,

Georges Cadoudal, and promised that if Napoleon would spare him, he would make him his aide-de-camp and would answer for him with his head. Just how long his head would have remained on his shoulders with Georges Cadoudal, the *Big Round Head*, the leader of the royalist armies, as his aide-de-camp, he did not in his impetuous generosity consider, but Napoleon, who was more dispassionate, decided irrevocably against Cadoudal.

In May 1804 the Empire was proclaimed, and Murat's was the second name on the list of marshals. He was also made Grand Admiral of France, a Senator, and, after Caroline had cried, begged, beseeched, and fainted to gain her point, a Prince. The painter David designed his costume as Grand Admiral, and it was extremely elegant, consisting of a doublet and hose, a long sheathed sword, and a cap with plumes.

In the September of 1805 war was declared against Austria. Napoleon cherished since his boyhood an admiration for the Cæsars, their armies, and their titles, so for the coming campaign Murat received the title of *Grand Maître de la Cavalerie*, which had a distinctly Roman sound.

His cavalry covered the main advance of the Grand Army on the Danube ; fought and won a little battle at Wertinger, which was, as Napoleon put it, " a very pleasing success to Murat " ; captured 8 standards, 10 cannons, and 25,000 prisoners ; assisted at the storming

of Elchingen; pursued the Archduke Charles, who had escaped from Ulm, as far as Nuremberg, taking in the five days' pursuit 15,000 prisoners, 11 standards, 128 guns and 1,000 wagons; returned to Munich and pursued the Russian Kutusoff with many adventures till it fell on and destroyed his cavalry at Raussnitz; and finally assisted at the victory of Austerlitz on the 2nd December. The treaty of Pressburg, signed December 22nd, concluded the war.

Murat, in reward for his services, was made Grand Duke of Berg and Cleves. His reception from the people of his new state was magnificent. He displayed himself alternately in the uniform of a French marshal and in Court robes of blue and gold. He was very happy in his new possessions.

On the 5th September war was declared against Prussia, and Murat again led the cavalry in the campaign that ended in the victory of Jena. After that battle, fought on the 14th October, he was too tired to write the date correctly on his official report of it to the Emperor.

After his pursuit of the Prussians, Napoleon sent him to subdue Poland. He said in his heart, "Perhaps I shall be chosen King of the Poles."

He determined to look the part, and thought out his costume very carefully, because he knew that in Poland the people are discerning and appreciative. He spent 27,000 francs on plumes alone. He delighted himself and he also delighted the Poles. The women adored

him, and the men flattered him. The last King of Poland's brother, Prince Poniatowski, presented to him the sword of the patriot King Stephen Battore with this inscription : " Another hero, but still for the Fatherland."

Murat thought that his services against the Prussians in the recent campaign merited the reward of a crown, and from the bottom of his heart he expected that it would be given to him. He lived in an age of ambition, and fulfilment came often enough to make it also an age of hopefulness.

Murat considered that the part he had played in the Jena campaign was worthy of any reward, and he was not at fault ; but Napoleon did not assign to him the Polish crown, and he was right.

When Murat appeared before him later, at Tilsit, in the beautiful costume he had prepared, glittering from head to foot with jewels and red gold, riding a magnificent horse, and carrying his head high, the Emperor said to him : " Go and put on a general's uniform ; you look like a circus rider."

Murat obeyed sadly, and felt that the Polish crown was lost to him.

He returned to Paris and consoled himself by buying a new gold dinner service.

CHAPTER XIII

1807

Who pants for glory finds but short repose.
POPE.

On the 27th July, Napoleon, in Paris, convened a Council of Ministers, to whom he said :

"We are now sure of Continental peace. And as for maritime peace, we shall soon obtain that, by the voluntary or forced concurrence of all the Continental Powers. Let us then enjoy our greatness, and now turn traders and manufacturers. I have had enough of the trade of general. I shall now resume, with you, that of First Minister, and recommence my great reviews of affairs, which it is time to substitute for my great reviews of armies."

There was a sense of assurance in his words, and, despite the ridiculous contradiction apparent in the first three lines of his speech, a genuine promise of lasting peace.

He had reason, at any rate, to desire it.

His work since 1805 had been, by the treaty of Pressburg (22nd December, 1805) to make peace with Austria, deprive her of all Venetia and of Lunéville, gain her recognition of himself as King of Italy, and, while granting her the city of Salzburg, force her to yield some territory to her allies, the Electors of Bavaria and Würtem-

berg, and to accept and recognize them as crowned kings. He had, ignoring the Diet of Ratisbon, suppressed a number of the smaller German states and the dominions of every Free Imperial Knight, added them to such states as were friendly to France, and bound them together in what he now called the Confederation of the Rhine. The Confederation, including the states of Würtemberg, Bavaria, Frankfürt, Baden, Berg, Hesse-Darmstadt, and Hesse-Nassau, had been declared formed on the 12th July, 1806. He had dealt with Prussia.

On the 2nd October, 1806, the ultimatum of King Frederick William III had been delivered to him at Bamberg. On the 4th he had destroyed the Prussian armies at the battles of Jena and Auerstadt. On the 27th he had entered Berlin, and found no one in the place save one of the King's sisters, who, being sick, had been left behind, and was in such a pitiable state, lacking even wood to make a fire, that he had been obliged to make her a present of 100,000 francs. Prussia had been occupied as far as the Elbe, and beyond.

He had perpetrated a campaign against Russia in East Prussia and Poland, and on the 8th February, 1807, the indecisive battle of Eylau had been fought. The carnage had been frightful, the struggle resembling a massacre, and the bodies of 18,000 Frenchmen had been covered by the slow-falling snow that night. Austria, had she decided to stand against him then, might have rendered his success uncertain, and

his return to France difficult, but as he had completely quelled her two years before, she was unable to make any belligerent move throughout the campaign.

On the 14th June Napoleon's victory at Friedland had persuaded the Emperor, Alexander of Russia, that the time had arrived to call a truce. And so the meeting at Tilsit on the 7th July had been arranged. The two Emperors, meeting on a raft moored in the River Niemen, had clasped hands, and Alexander had felt himself willing to grant anything that Napoleon might require of him. He stated that he detested the English.

Napoleon himself, though evidently aware of the strength of his own personality, seemed unaware of its danger to himself. He was tempted to take too great advantage of Alexander's surrender without enquiring with any perception into the cause of it. He was later to have ample opportunity of studying the way in which Alexander gave him his demands and granted his conditions, when they lay before him untouched by the magic of his personal fascinations ; he was not aware that his mastery over the sensitive and receptive mind of Alexander was only momentary, and the events that lay in the future were completely unforeseen by him.

By the treaty which the pair of them signed, the Franco-Russian alliance was made secure ; the enormously diminished, once extinct state of Poland was re-established under the name

of the Duchy of Warsaw ; peace was declared between France and Prussia, Frederick William, who had been residing in unhappy state at Königsberg, being left Brandenburg, Silesia and East Prussia, but being deprived of all his territory between the Rhine and the Elbe ; the city of Dantzig was given back its independence, under the protection of Prussia and Saxony ; Napoleon promised to aid the Tsar in his war against the Turks and to assist in driving them from all their European possessions, save Thrace and Constantinople ; the Tsar recognized Napoleon's brothers—Joseph as King of Naples, Louis as King of Holland, Jérôme as King of Westphalia—and promised to put Napoleon's Continental System into effect in his dominions.

Notwithstanding the fact that each one of these conditions held cause for future war, the news of the treaty was hailed with joy by the people of France, to whom it appeared to hold out some promise of peace.

In two years' time the Emperor had accomplished an effective amount of work. Three successive and separate wars had been fought and won. The affairs of many men had been arranged ; to many death had been brought ; to many a new lease of life had been given. Europe had been revolutionized and reshaped. He said to his people : " Let us enjoy our greatness."

The Affairs of M. Bertin de Vaux

Two months after this Napoleon saw fit to engage himself in the affairs of a certain M.

Bertin de Vaux. As early as 1801 M. Bertin had been exiled to Elba for holding forbidden correspondence with England, and he had been distrusted ever since. He was now one of the directors of the *Journal de l'Empire*, and as such was causing the Emperor infinite suspicion and anxiety. Incidentally, when Napoleon had changed the name of this paper from its earlier title, the *Journal des Débats*, he had taken 3,300 francs of its net profit of 8,000 francs.

With determination to end it, the Emperor took up his pen and wrote the following letter to his State Councillor Favellette :

" I greatly approve the idea that M. Bertin de Vaux should withdraw from all connection, direct or indirect, with the *Journal de l'Empire*. I am too fully informed as to his former relations with foreign countries not to be pleased at his present decision. The only way, indeed, in which he can make himself safe, and provide against all the vicissitudes of unforeseen circumstances, is to cease all attempts to influence politics. And even if this were not so, I have the strongest feeling that there is no man in France who has greater need to behave prudently, and avoid everything that might tend to mix him up with politics. For it is time, at last, that those who have taken up the Bourbon cause, directly or indirectly, should remember the Scripture history, and what David did to the house of Ahab. . . .

" As regards the position of stockbroker, I shall make enquiries. If M. Bertin's financial reputation is good, as I believe it to be, I shall

appoint him, and shall be glad that M. Fiévree should acquire the two twelfth shares of the newspaper from him by purchase. I conclude him to be well acquainted by this time with the spirit in which I desire this paper to be directed, and to be thoroughly convinced that a man who receives my bounty and whose writings have a direct influence on public opinion must steer an open and straight course, without any backsliding —act and speak, in fact, as one of David's faithful servants would have spoken to the partisans of the preceding dynasty."

Had Napoleon himself been better acquainted with the Scripture history, he would have been aware that it was Jehu, and not David, who had annihilated the house of Ahab—Jehu, to whom messengers had come and said : " Is it peace ? " and to whom it is recorded that he had replied, pushing them aside, because the matter that he had in hand was urgent : " What hast thou to do with peace ? "

CHAPTER XIV

1808

Many are the examples of the great odds between numbers and courage. BACON.

A MEETING had been arranged between the Emperor Napoleon of France and Alexander of Russia, and it took place at Erfurt in the month of August, to the complete satisfaction of all concerned.

Alexander was at the age when hero-worship is natural, and, if unexploited, is at least uncondemned. In Napoleon he imagined that he had found his perfect hero, and he worshipped faithfully, dutifully, and unashamedly. It was fortunate for him that disillusionment came when he was old enough to be unmoved by it.

There is a story that illustrates to perfection the youthful naïveté of his character at this time. He would have become enamoured of one of the French actresses, Mlle. Bourgoin, had not Napoleon let fall a remark to the effect that if he did so, the lady would soon make her Imperial lover too well known in the salons of Paris to permit of his afterwards becoming considered a hero in France.

It is only a short step from hero-worship to subservience, a step that to the devotee is practically imperceptible. Alexander took this step

without realizing it, and placed himself unreservedly at the mercy of Napoleon.

Napoleon said, with a simplicity almost overwhelming, that he and Alexander would partition Europe between them.

Alexander once came into Napoleon's dining-room and went to lay aside his sword. He found that he had forgotten it, and became slightly embarrassed. Napoleon, seeing it, exclaimed at once, "Take mine!" holding it out to him. Alexander took it with real pleasure and said, with the ready courtesy and happiness of expression that was habitual to him: "I accept your Majesty's gift as a pledge of friendship. Be assured that I shall never draw it against you."

The meeting at Erfurt was held presumably for the purpose of discussing the political situation, but it was made the excuse for the gathering together of men whose great names were celebrated not only in the sphere of politics. They came from all parts of the Continent—authors, artists, philosophers, scientists, actors—bringing with them the treasures of their knowledge, their talent and their genius. It was as though, recognizing that they had been conquered, they paid tribute to their conqueror, first with reluctance, afterwards willingly.

Goethe

On the morning of the 2nd October the Emperor was seated at breakfast, with Talleyrand, as usual, standing at his right hand, and Daru at his left. He was waiting for Goethe to

be presented to him, and presently the door opened and the poet, little and old, but with the arrogance of sixty years' supremacy in his bearing, was shown in.

Wieland, when he had spoken to Napoleon, had said afterwards that the Emperor appeared to him as bronze. Müller he had "inspired with a sort of love." Goethe he regarded fixedly for a few minutes, and then said with a sincerity that was apparent despite the sententiousness of its attempt at dramatic utterance: "You are a man!"

And Goethe bowed, in acknowledgment of the compliment, and they fell very appropriately to a discussion of books, Napoleon quoting many passages from *Werther*, which romance he said he had read seven times, to its author, who listened to him with a deep and grave attention.

They became aware of a certain sympathy existing between them. It was the sympathy that can arise between men whose ways of life are widely divergent, whose ideals are at variance with one another, who have nothing in common with one another, who can never clash with one another, and yet whose outlook on the separate aspects of their lives is identical.

Goethe was not unique in wishing to regard himself with a greater admiration than he accorded to any other creature, living or dead. He had about him the air of the successful rebel, for, having commenced his life as an unknown revolutionary, he had come eventually to a time when he completely overmastered his world, and influenced

its inhabitants to such a degree that they could scarcely picture its continued rotation without him. A clear-sighted, yet narrow-bounded vision had given him the impulse of revolt. He had come to maturity, and found himself in a world whose state of complacency was distressing to him, when taken in connection with its mental condition, which bordered on decay. It was governed by the spirit of reality, and circled about by an appallingly intricate circle of fact. It unhesitatingly accepted Reason as the dominating factor in its composition. It allowed a certain subtlety of expression to be employed, but forbade the use of the imagination. A few wise spirits had laid down a plan, eminently suitable, ineffably wearying for the guidance of their successors. The world accepted the plan, and discouraged any deviation from it. In a word, it discouraged originality.

The inevitable consequence was that it lacked all vigour. It turned energy into recognized channels, thwarting, and finally preventing the freedom of its flow. Its condition became static, and it appeared more than satisfied that it should remain so. Lack of vigour does not necessarily indicate orderly perfection, nor does it imply total absence of movement. Beneath this fabrication of artificiality whose continued and tolerated existence gave evidence of its strength, a few discontented spirits struggled and murmured ceaselessly.

They did not dare to lift up their voices loudly, and in that lay the futility of their endeavours.

They were lacking in bravery. They wanted the confidence that an inspiring leadership would have given them. The constraint of the eighteenth century was still on them; they felt themselves to be restricted; they whispered against it; terror mingled with their anger, and robbed it of the strength of purpose.

To these and to many others, Goethe opened the way of romance in all its broad simplicity. He had an extraordinary confidence in himself, and in the object of his work; he had the efficiency of craftsmanship which they had lacked, and which was, above all, necessary for its success. His methods were unavoidably destructive, while being fundamentally constructive. He himself was strong enough to keep straight along the wide road that he had rediscovered for his world, but there were numerous travellers, weaker and less experienced than he, who were tempted to follow its many bypaths, and who, in wandering from it, were lost.

It has been said that marks of praise and approbation should be reserved only for the young, because they alone feel the need of them; and to a certain extent this is true. If youth commits an action, and the world disapproves, youth can fling its opinion back in its scolding face, with a gesture of superb defiance, but it will always stand poised, and wait for the world's expression of astonished admiration at the gesture. Those who live longer learn to disregard the world's praise, and also to fear its censure. If the world turns against and condemns a man who is no longer young, he

becomes afraid, because he knows that his life's work is almost accomplished, and that it can never be improved upon or undone ; while, if he is left to himself, he can persevere steadily along a difficult road where the feet of youth would falter for the want of encouragement.

But Goethe, ceasing to be young and reaching maturity early through the force of his own genius, could not, and did not, develop all points of his character equally. To the end, in some respects, he remained an amazing child. He desired always to be praised for what he had done, admired for what he would do, and appreciated for what he was. Very frequently the immensity of his own powers blinded him to the genius of other men. Franz Schubert set to music Goethe's " Erl King," and Goethe did not trouble himself to acknowledge the gift when he received it.

He had many critics, but he was bold enough to stand out against them ; he was foremost in recognizing his own superiority over his contemporaries. He was fortunate in living to see the effects of his own work.

In 1815, after Waterloo had been fought, one of his friends asked him if he were not surprised to see the complete collapse of so great a genius as Napoleon.

" No," he replied, and the questioner caught a sound of rebuke in his tone, as though some personal slight had been offered. " I did not write my *Werther* twice."

CHAPTER XV

1809

What can be avoided whose end is purposed by the mighty gods ?
SHAKESPEARE.

IN the early days of 1807 Napoleon returned from Spain, where he had conducted a short and apparently triumphant campaign. He had defeated the ends of his enemies, and had succeeded, after some trouble, in establishing his brother Joseph firmly on the Spanish throne.

In July was fought the battle of Wagram, by which the Emperor was successful in obliterating from the minds of his soldiers the battles of Aspern and Essling, fought in the same year, at which he had very nearly been unsuccessful. From a palace in Vienna, in 1809, he again dictated terms to a Europe that he had cowed.

I. THE CONQUEST OF SPAIN

An eye-witness has written of Napoleon's ride from Spain, that, having spent five days at Valladolid writing dispatches to his armies in all parts of Europe, he mounted his horse and rode with the speed of one possessed from there to Paris. In five hours he rode eighty-five miles. Relays of horses had been provided for him along the road, and each time a post was reached he flung himself on the fresh horse that awaited him, and, spurring it to a gallop, proceeded on his way.

His face, though pale, was very calm ; his lips were tightly compressed. He kept jerking at his bridle to hasten the speed of his horse. His suite could hardly keep pace with him. They did not speak with one another, as their wild ride left them no time either for conversation or for thought.

They left the country behind them, as though they desired to leave behind them also all memory of their adventure in Spain.

From the first only misfortune had awaited the French troops that crossed the Pyrenees—misfortune concealed beneath the guise of victorious conquest.

The first troops to cross the border had been those under the command of Marshal Junot. They had gone out with the object of possessing Portugal. They had marched from Bayonne to Lisbon, and thousands of them had perished on the way. They had been very young—Napoleon himself had alluded to them as " lambs," but he had considered lambs to be strong enough for the conquest of Portugal. They had been untrained in Napoleonic methods of warfare, and when they found that the Army was not going to encumber itself and hinder its march by carrying provisions with it for the soldiers, they, being unskilled in the arts of plundering, had been unable to find food, and had perished in all the pain of starvation.

Portugal had been conquered without a blow. When Junot had arrived in Lisbon, the King and Queen had fled the country, and no man had disputed the conquerors the right to enter.

Nevertheless, Napoleon had continued to pour troops into Spain, to support, as he said, the peacefully situated Junot in Lisbon. Spain had permitted the entrance of these troops because she looked forward to a share in the partition of Portugal as a reward.

Napoleon was regarding the Spanish court with some intentness. His gaze rested on the King, Charles IV, who was so old in mind, if not in years, that he was incapable of anything save acquiescence ; on the Queen, who, finding little in her husband with which to interest herself, interested herself more than a little with her Minister Godoy ; on Godoy himself, who in appearance bore something of a resemblance to a bull, and who, styled the Prince of Peace, never failed to inspire feelings of revolt in those over whom he ruled ; and on the King's son and heir, Ferdinand, eager for the advancement of his future subjects, ardent, youthful, and, apparently, guileless.

Napoleon had appointed Murat to command the French forces in the Peninsula, and had given him orders that, in face of France's friendly attitude towards Spain, were inexplicable. But if Murat had not possessed sufficient discernment to see at first what was underlying his orders, he possessed sufficient awe of Napoleon, and desire for his own aggrandizement, to obey them to the letter.

There had been a rising in Madrid, directed against the Prince of Peace. The mob broke into his palace, wrecked it and stripped it of its valuables. Godoy himself had crouched behind

a roll of matting in an attic and remained there until hunger drove him into the streets, where he would have been torn to pieces by the furious people, had it not been for the intervention of Ferdinand.

The old King, who had an incomprehensible affection for Godoy, feared for his future safety and abdicated the throne.

Amidst general rejoicing, his son Ferdinand was accepted in his stead, and it was generally believed throughout Spain that the alliance with France would be strengthened by the marriage of Ferdinand to one of the Imperial dependents.

Murat, with the utmost calmness, took up his pen and wrote thus to Napoleon :

" The sight of a king stripped of his crown will excite sympathy, and it will even be directed against his son, whom people can hardly avoid regarding as a rebellious son, if, as the letter to the Queen seems to show, and if, as is generally believed, it is true that he forced his father to abdicate the throne. If he (King Charles) comes to my headquarters, I shall send him to Your Majesty, and then Spain will be really without a king, and you will be in a position to refuse the son, whom one may regard as an usurper."

Between the lines of this letter it is not difficult to read Murat's hope that Spain being " really without a king," his own coronation would soon be an accomplished fact. He was to be disappointed, as all who had hopes in Spain were disappointed. He sent to Napoleon the sword that Francis I had surrendered to Charles V

at Pavia, with an account of the oration that he had carefully prepared and given at its presentation. Napoleon replied irritably that the sword of Francis I was nothing to him, Francis being only a Bourbon, and that, at any rate, he had been defeated by Italians at Pavia, the Spaniards having taken no part in the battle.

In this little thing he was as much at fault as in any of his greater dealings with Spain. Francis was not a Bourbon ; he was a Valois, and it was to the strength of the Spanish infantry that he had owed his defeat at Pavia.

Charles IV and his Queen now placed themselves at the disposal of the French, and Napoleon directed Murat to invite them to go to Bayonne. At the same time he sent Savary to Madrid to accompany Ferdinand there, ostensibly to discuss terms, and Ferdinard, all simplicity and patriotic anxiety to do the best for his country, had gone with him, ignoring the fact that Savary was practically a police officer. Incidentally, it may be mentioned that Savary was fond of Napoleon, and, being older than him, looked upon himself somewhat as his father.

The general commanding the French forces in the north of Spain had orders to use force if either Charles or Ferdinand showed himself disinclined to cross the frontier. They had both appeared perfectly willing, however, and on their arrival at Bayonne, were calmly placed in custody and sent to the house of Talleyrand as Napoleon's prisoners.

Years later, the Emperor, speaking of his own

treachery, said, with illuminating frankness, and with the detachment characteristic of him :

" The whole thing wears an ugly look, now that I have fallen."

At all events, Spain was now without a king. Napoleon, ignoring Murat, offered the crown to his brother Louis. Louis, who had once been heard to remark that excess in anything was bad, refused it. Napoleon then conferred it on Joseph—Joseph, who, he had once said, would make an excellent priest—and Joseph accepted it.

He made his way from Bayonne to Madrid, accompanied by a French army, which, in order to open a way to his capital, had to fight the pitched battle of Medina de Rio Seco.

From that moment onwards he had been in difficulty and had required the assistance of his brother to help him out of it. It was this that had been occupying Napoleon during the last few months.

He had quelled the rising against King Joseph with the utmost firmness. It was the news of Dupont's humiliating surrender to the English with all his troops that had at first summoned him from France.

He had assembled an army of 200,000 men in the Pyrenees—wolves to avenge what he might have described as the slaughter of the lambs.

On the 3rd November, 1808, he had been at Bayonne. He had commenced a re-organization of the Army ; he had reviewed the troops. On the 4th he had been sixty miles

away at Tolosa. The following day he had been thirty miles farther on at Vittoria, and it was here, in the space of two hours, that he had decided on his entire plan for the campaign. And here, for almost the first time, he saw his orders unfaithfully executed.

He had intended to let the armies of the fanatical Spanish insurgents completely surround his own troops, which were to be closely concentrated. Then he, in command of his veteran army, would hurl himself into their midst and startle them into panic. Finally, leaving two bands of his veterans to check any movement of the right or left wing of the enemy, he with 80,000 men would cut the Spanish army in two in the centre and, falling successively on the separate wings, would destroy them.

But the spirit of his generals had been roused by the boastful audacity of the Spaniards, and, by occasionally attacking them in defiance of Napoleon's orders, they had somewhat dispersed their various corps and prevented their too close concentration.

Napoleon, however, adhered to his original plan and succeeded in defeating his enemies and in re-establishing his brother Joseph firmly on the throne.

But the men who accompanied him from Valladolid to Paris saw that he rode silently and furiously ; they could sympathize with his lonely desperation, though they could have no share in it.

They had seen that there was no glory in

Spain; perhaps they realized also that there was no safety in it. They had defeated and crushed their opponents, and yet, in the country that they left behind them, there was something unsettled and terrible, something dangerous, and something that spelt disaster. The country had been conquered, and yet it remained strangely unconquered. In a dim, half-comprehended fashion, they were aware that their work there had not been finished. The full price of their victory had not been paid by the appalling scenes of bloodshed at Burgos, at Epinosa, at the Pass of Samosierra, and at Madrid. The pursuit of Sir John Moore had not been the end of their struggle with the English. They had left Soult behind to continue the pursuit, and instinctively they knew that it would be useless now for them to turn back, just as it was useless to speculate on the colossal number of men that would have to die before the conquest of Spain could be finally assured. Napoleon had once said, "If I take up a decided position publicly I must go forward and carry it through, cost what it may." He had led many men to their deaths because they were brave enough to die. There was not one among them that had the wisdom, or the supreme courage, to cry out to him, "I am afraid!"

II. Lannes

The battle of Aspern was fought on the 22nd May, and on that day Marshal Lannes, the Duke of Montebello, was mortally wounded.

Nine years before, when the battle of Marengo had been fought, France had lost her most perfect type of revolutionary soldier in the person of Desaix; when Marshal Lannes had bled away his life, she had lost, also, her most perfect expression of the imperial soldier. We have hitherto had opportunity of studying the lives of men who possessed no qualities great enough to allow of them holding, in any circumstances, a position in France similar to that held by Napoleon. In Lannes we come to the one man who possessed qualities not too little, but too great, to allow of him holding such a position.

He was valiant and courageous, and a great lover of glory. He possessed a peculiar nobility of spirit; he was one of the few men Napoleon had called his friend.

His bravery, physically and mentally, was supreme. Nothing daunted him, nothing could completely overpower him. His pride was the outcome, not of vanity, but of well-tried and firmly established confidence.

After he had joined the Army, and laboriously worked his way up from the rank of sergeant-major to that of general of brigade, the Thermidorian reaction deprived him of his command. He joined the Army of Italy as a simple volunteer, and worked with tireless patience until the rank of general of brigade was again conferred on him by Bonaparte.

He fought in Italy, in Germany, in the Pyrenees, in Egypt, in Spain, and in Portugal.

He was the son of a livery stables keeper, but his son was to become a peer of France at the bidding of Louis XVIII. Napoleon said of him that he found him a pigmy, and lost him a giant.

He was not nobly born, but a lack of aristocratic parentage could not detract from the goodness and consequent strength inherent in his personality. He was virtuous without being austere, upright without being self-righteous, egotistical without being fundamentally cruel. His soldiers—he commanded the Young Guard —had for him a passionate admiration. He could be chivalrous, even in a moment of victory. He was charged with an energy that prevented his thoughts from turning in upon himself.

He was, in a measure, free from the spirit of jealous rivalry that tormented so many of his companions. He made friends easily and kept them long. He could be grateful to Napoleon rather than jealous of him; their interests and ideals, if not their personal ambitions, had been the same. Lannes was intelligent—at least sufficiently so to make companionship pleasant for both; he was "violent and hasty in his expressions," but his conversation did not lack interest.

"His courage," said Napoleon, "at first outweighed his thinking faculty. But as the years advanced and experiences came to him, this defect in his character was made good."

Napoleon described the scene of his death with a sort of defensive pride. He had once said :

"A man must be strong and have a strong character, otherwise he should not occupy himself with matters of war or statecraft."

"In his hour of death he clung to me and would have no one but me. It was a kind of instinct. He loved his wife and children more than me, but he did not speak of them; he expected nothing from them. I was his protector. I was the providence on whom he called."

Lannes had given his life to the creation of the First Empire, not because he had thought that by doing so he would justify his own birth, but because he thought that therein lay the greatest chances of glory for himself.

He had lived hurriedly and had not had time to look about him; therefore it was permitted to him to see the great events of his time, in all their undeniable grandeur, without being troubled by the consciousness of those smaller and significant incidents which he would have endeavoured to ignore, in the knowledge that they might have a deeper and more terrible meaning than the things for which he expressed enthusiasm. He left it at the moment when its magnificence was most apparent and before its weaknesses had manifested themselves.

He had lived in the age that had embodied within itself the entire forces that had gone to make, and to destroy, the Republic. He died and believed that he had seen its aims gloriously fulfilled. Napoleon said of it:

"Lannes fell on the highest step of his development."

CHAPTER XVI

1810

Let a man contend to the uttermost for his life's set prize, be it what it will. R. BROWNING.

THE great event of the year 1810 was, of course, the marriage of the Emperor Napoleon to Marie Louise, Archduchess of Austria.

In the December of 1809, Napoleon was divorced from his first wife, Josephine Beauharnais. On the 1st April, 1810, his civil marriage with his second wife took place, and on the following day the religious ceremony was performed.

The festivities with which this event was celebrated in Paris and elsewhere were brilliant and of the utmost splendour. The Empire seemed at last established on a secure basis and the people rejoiced at it. The city of Paris made costly presents to the Emperor and his bride. At a banquet at Valençay, Prince Ferdinand of Spain, Napoleon's prisoner, whom he had tricked, cheated, and deceived, was so carried away by the popular enthusiasm that he was heard to propose the health of "Napoleon the Great and of his august spouse, Marie Louise."

THE EMPEROR FRANCIS

Marie Louise was the daughter of Francis II, the last of the Holy Roman Emperors. She was,

therefore, the descendant of one of the oldest families in Europe. She did not at first wish to marry Napoleon, being, indeed, terrified of him, but, on finding that her father was insistent on the point, she submitted to it as gracefully as possible, and became, as long as her husband had any need of her, as model a wife as she had been a model daughter.

Her father showed his relief perhaps rather too plainly, but even his daughter would admit that his relief was reasonable.

Francis II had commenced his reign at the early age of twenty-four. He had found his dominions to be scattered over an enormously wide area, extending through Italy, Germany, and the Low Countries. Among his subjects he had counted Bohemians, Hungarians, Dutch, Belgians, and Swiss. Francis was nervous and determined ; he placed a kind of desperate faith in himself, and he retained throughout a life of difficulty, tribulation, and disappointment a steady and unwavering trust in his country.

One of his first acts was to get rid of the ubiquitous ministers on whose counsels his father had unfailingly relied. Finding none of them to his taste, he had decided to act at once as his own Prime Minister and as his own Minister for Foreign Affairs.

" The action of a rash, independent youth," said the wiseacres, shaking their heads, but, if such it was, it answered well and, for a time at least, justified itself.

Francis saw that the people over whom he

ruled were not willingly under the domination of Austria. They were scattered haphazard over the face of Europe and were held together by no sort of bond. They were in a continual state of rebellion, conspiracy and discontent; they were never for a moment safe from the attacks and corruptions of revolutionary France.

The original mentality and broadness of outlook possessed by Francis were kept by him well under control. He permitted himself to be served by them, but never to be governed by them. It was only in not taking the fullest advantage of them that he fell short of being a great man.

Shakespeare has a line in which he sets forth an ideal that it would be practically impossible to attain. He says:

"Let all the ends thou aim'st at be thy country's, thy God's, and thy truth's."

Had he written "thy country's, thy God's, *or* thy truth's," it might be said that Francis had attained the ideal.

For him, the ends of his country and his truth were synonymous. He put those of his country first, and they became those of his truth. Remembering that the ends of his God might neither be those of his country nor of his truth, he put them from him as something beyond his comprehension.

He had no toleration whatever for the ideals of a republic. He could in no way visualize Austria under a republican government, largely, and, perhaps, genuinely unconsciously, because

he could see no place for himself therein. Seeing, however, that his people might be of a different mind on the subject, he conceived the idea of saving them from it, by uniting his dominions under the name of the Austrian Empire and of giving himself the title of Francis I, Emperor of Austria. The idea was approved, materialized, and by its means the countries under his rule were given a certain unity; what was more important, Austria was prevented from falling into a position in European affairs lower than that occupied by France and Russia.

The Emperor Francis, as befitted his position as representative of one of the oldest houses in Europe, continued to oppose, with vigour, the designs of the newly crowned Emperor of the French.

In Austria, during his reign, everything that was of France was looked upon with horror. The country braced itself against it, and, despite continued defeats, withstood it. The Archdukes Charles and John grew up to be soldiers and to struggle for the maintenance of the old monarchy against the rude onrush of the new. The little Archduchess Marie Louise was taught to clap her hands if she heard that the soldiers of Napoleon had anywhere met with defeat, and she learnt to pray at night for the death of the man who was looked upon as Anti-Christ. The battle of Austerlitz, fought in 1805, should have crushed Austria for half a century. She recovered from it and endeavoured to assist her allies in the following year, at Jena, where Napoleon

was completely victorious. In 1809 she again opposed the French at Wagram, and again met with defeat.

At this a spirit of hopelessness began to make itself felt throughout the country—a wavering spirit verging on despair. The Emperor Francis was dogged and tenacious ; he refused to admit that Austria had received her death-blow ; he refused to recognize the possibility of her succumbing to it. His persistence was looked upon now as obstinacy, but he continued to persist. All that the country wanted was time—time to recover herself, time to collect and reorganize her scattered forces, time to gather strength. . . . Perplexity surrounded him, but his insistence remained unweakened ; an opportunity by which time might be gained would surely present itself. It was rumoured that Napoleon was about to divorce his wife, because it was impossible now that she could ever bear him a child. The son of his stepdaughter Hortense, whom he had once intended to make his heir, was dead, and he was feeling the growing necessity of having a son of his own. As was inevitable, he was considering an alliance with a woman of one of the great houses of Europe.

For a time he appeared to approve Anne of Russia, but, receiving no encouragement in that quarter, he perforce turned his attention elsewhere.

Francis remembered that his daughter Marie Louise was growing up. The Archduchess was at that time nineteen years of age, tall,

flaxen-haired, graceful, and, if possessing neither superlative beauty nor superlative charm, she was reasonably healthy and fair to look upon.

Francis made up his mind and took the unalterable decision. If it was necessary for a sacrifice to be made for the sake of his purpose, a sacrifice would be made.

The marriage of his daughter to Napoleon would be advantageous from every point, saving, of course, the least important, that was personal. It would ensure peace for Austria, at any rate for a time. For such a cause it was useless to count the cost. Prejudice and affection must be set aside ; the parentage alike of Napoleon and of his daughter must be ignored. It was necessary that the fate of Marie Antoinette, the last Austrian princess to bring about an alliance with France, should be forgotten. Napoleon had once said that Francis of Austria was less gifted than Alexander of Russia, but that he was more honest. Marie Louise was told of the arrangements made for her future, and requested to make herself as attractive as possible to the conqueror.

She was successful in charming Napoleon.

On one occasion just after their marriage in April, when he had reason to be particularly pleased with her, he asked what instructions she had received at Vienna as to her behaviour towards her husband.

" Only to be entirely devoted to you," replied this daughter of the Hapsburgs with engaging sweetness, " and to obey you in all things."

It is a strange thing, but the history of Francis II, Roman Emperor, who became Francis I, Emperor of Austria, does not, when the facts of it are looked at, apart from the man who was responsible for them, differ to any great extent from that of the First Consul of the Republic who became Napoleon I, Emperor of the French.

Each found himself in a position of power at an early age, and each accepted his position, and the responsibilities it entailed, with a sense of fearlessness, and in an attitude of calm resolve. Each dispensed, as soon as possible, with the counsels of other and older men and took upon himself to govern with complete independence. Each struggled boldly, continuously and unhesitatingly for the advancement of his own purposes, and neither considered the immediate welfare of those under his rule. In 1809 Napoleon divorced the wife whom he had loved for twelve years, for the sake of an unestablished dynasty; a few months later, Francis gave up his nineteen-year-old daughter for the sake of the political interests of his country. When the similarity between them has been thus recognized, the difference will become apparent when it has been determined to what extent the actions of the one were responsible for those of the other.

CHAPTER XVII

1811

My grief lies onward and my joy behind.
SHAKESPEARE.

THE year 1811 was a year of glory in the history of France. To the men living then it must be remembered that 1812 was an expectation and not a realization. The year showed the Empire at once at its greatest and at its least great. The battle of Wagram, fought in 1809, had given France an immense prestige abroad. She was felt now by the majority of her supporters and opponents to be practically invulnerable; but, as the enthusiasm for Greek and Roman culture had not yet declined, there were some that remembered the story of Achilles.

The maintenance of this prestige entailed an extraordinary amount of labour on the part of the Emperor. Particular restrictions were placed on the Press, especially in those states newly annexed to France. In Paris itself only four newspapers were permitted, and to each department there was allotted one, and one only. The country was rich, largely because of the tribute taken from conquered nations, and the building of roads, canals, bridges, and Government buildings was the order of the day. But the system of police inspection under which

the whole country lived was rigorously and somewhat ominously enforced.

Despite this, there was in 1811 an attempt made to assassinate the Emperor by a young German named La Salha. It is noteworthy that two years before an attempt had been made by the nineteen-year-old Staaps, also a German, and while in 1809 Staaps paid the price of his life for his folly, La Salha in 1811 was pardoned. It might be regarded either as an indication of greater magnanimity on the part of the Emperor, or as a sign of growing confidence in himself, and of consequent carelessness.

Napoleon's quarrel with the Pope, which was engaging the interest of the Catholic world, progressed favourably to himself, as the Vicar of Christ was then virtually, and was soon to be actually, his prisoner. On the 20th March occurred the event for which he had been waiting so long, and which, as he believed, assured to him his dynasty. His wife, Marie Louise, formerly Archduchess of Austria, gave birth to a son. The fêtes and public rejoicings on this occasion were magnificent. Congratulations came to the Emperor from Rome, Naples, Amsterdam, and Milan. From Austria, Russia, Prussia, and Saxony came ambassadors extraordinary, conveying the compliments of their respective sovereigns, and felicitations on the happy event. It was at that time expected that the King of Rome, as the child was called, would one day rule over some eighty-five million

subjects. His Empire would extend from the Baltic to the Pyrenees, and from Terracina to the port of Brest. Napoleon was heard to say, with great distinctness :

" There is only Russia and I shall crush it ! "

As soon after the birth of her son as the Empress was well enough to travel, Napoleon made a tour with her through many of the French departments, including Holland and Belgium. They were received with enthusiasm, and triumphal arches, fêtes, balls, and celebrations of all kinds marked their passing. Napoleon had opportunities of studying the benefits that his Code conferred on the states that he had brought under his domination. He had also an opportunity of studying something else. In Holland he undertook to establish a Chamber of Commerce.

" Sire," said one of the citizens to him, " a closet would hold all the commerce that is left to Holland now."

Chateaubriand

The Comte de Chateaubriand, author of *Atala* and *The Beauties of Christianity*, had been elected a member of the French Institute.

The influence of Napoleon had been largely responsible for his election, and perhaps in thus displaying his discrimination, the Emperor had had in mind the saying of Seneca :

" The true test of a great mind is to throw away one's bounty, and still to give."

Be that as it may, Chateaubriand, disliking

Napoleon and reluctant to confess himself under his influence, failed to appreciate the gift.

He was not backward in expressing his opinions of the Emperor, and also in true Napoleonic fashion, though it would have infuriated him to know it, his opinions of himself.

He admitted that Napoleon "knew how to win battles," but "apart from that there is no commonplace general that is not more skilful than he." But then "we started our careers together, Bonaparte and I, unknown second lieutenants." Later, "My *Génie du Christianisme* acted on Napoleon," and, "The murder of the Duc d'Enghien altered my life; it also changed Napoleon's."

In a miraculous way did Chateaubriand rise superior to the other beings of his time:

"Napoleon saw kings in awe of him, but not me!" "He made kings tremble, but never me!" "He may have done away with kings —he has not done away with me!" "I am willing to grant him all the titles you please, except that of Great!"

Towards the end, however, the god showed himself to be nothing more than a man by his confidential whisper that Napoleon's praise of him on St. Helena "tickled him deliciously." Chateaubriand found, somewhat to his disgust, that his election to the Institute imposed on him the duty of composing and pronouncing an eulogy on the person whom he succeeded. When he found that it imposed on him the task of eulogizing M. Chénier, his disgust knew no

bounds. He would have none of it. In his opening speech he denounced M. Chénier very deliberately, and with the fearlessness that had its root in his love of notoriety as a democrat and regicide.

As was natural, his scandalous proceeding aroused some comment, and the affair came to Napoleon's ears.

Mingled with his fury on learning of it there was perhaps something of fear.

The Institute was not a political trumpet. It was supposed to confine itself entirely to matters of art, literature, and science. Notwithstanding this, the words "democrat" and "regicide" were being freely pronounced in the precincts, and sanctioned by men of influence and intelligence. The words had about them a flavour of the last century. The fact that they still had power to rouse interest and stir up controversy among his people robbed him of all sense of continued security. He might have wearied and lost faith in himself had he not been able to rouse himself to anger against the man who had introduced them, and the men who had permitted them to be introduced.

In his formal rebuke to them occurred the words heavy with a half-realized foreboding :

"Has the object of all my care, the fruit of all my efforts, been unavailing so that, *as soon as my presence no longer restrains you*, you are ready to imbue your hands in each other's blood ?"

Being Napoleon, however, he must alter the tone of his rebuke towards the end, and conclude

it characteristically, with conscious grandeur and with an irony that was pathetic, because, in this instance, it was unconscious :

" I have never had but one aim, never asked but one question, ' Will you sincerely help me in promoting the true interests of France ? ' All who have answered this question have been placed in a straight road, and urged onward to the attainment of honour, glory, and splendour for France."

CHAPTER XVIII

1812

Craven he was not: sudden had been the call on him, and sudden was his answer to the call. He saw, he heard, he comprehended the ruin that was coming down: already its gloomy shadow darkened above him: and already he was measuring his strength to deal with it. THOMAS DE QUINCEY.

IN 1812 commenced the German war of liberation.

The oppression that she had borne under the domination of Napoleon roused in Germany that year a spirit of patriotism and a desire for national independence that had not been felt since the days of Frederick the Great's sovereignty over Russia. Opportunities arose for the teaching of new philosophies, and they were seized by such men as Fichte.

Prussia had realized that, in her complaisant state of military and political perfection, she could not expect to stand against the equally complaisant imperfections of revolutionary and imperial France.

Under the influence of Stein, she commenced to reorganize her entire system of government. She went a long way towards abolishing serfdom; she renovated and improved her institutes of elementary and secondary education; and she undertook a series of drastic army reforms.

It was this desire for military improvement and development that led to the war-threatening policy of a fundamentally peace-loving Bismarck, and eventually, through the incapacity of the Emperor William II to deal with the immense forces placed in his hands, to the war of our own times. Terrible, senseless, and devastating though it was in itself, we perceive that the effects of that war, as they become things of the past, have been produced for our own development, and for the sake of our ultimate benefit.

In the middle of December there crossed the Niemen, on their way from Russia to France, 20,000 men. Some of them carried muskets. Among them there were two kings, a prince, eight marshals, and a few generals. The Emperor was no longer with them ; he had abandoned them at Smorgoni. While he had led them a semblance of order had been maintained. Directly his departure had become known, one of the senior officers had turned to a comrade with the words :

" Well, has the ruffian gone ? "

And the comrade, who had apparently served with the Army for at least twelve years, and who was to continue his service for another three, had replied with emphasis :

" Yes, he has played us the same trick as in Egypt ! "

They walked aimlessly, these men, and in their eyes there was a certain expression of wonderment. In their minds there was a suc-

cession of thoughts sprung from a succession of bleak remembrances that they endeavoured to forget. . . .

Discipline is lost; no orders are given; no obedience is exacted. All rank and individuality is swallowed up in one miserable struggle for existence. Men cling together, hating each other, yet afraid to separate. They are haunted by the fear of being abandoned to a solitary death in the snows.

For a piece of bread a man murders his brother; friendship is a thing forgotten and disregarded.

Many women accompany the Army; they are half naked, for their clothes and shoes have been snatched from them. They buy their bread at the price of their shame. They see their children die painfully before their eyes, and are unable to weep for it.

Loot, in the shape of gold and silver vessels, has been brought from Moscow. It has ceased to have any value, and is cast aside because it is too heavy to carry.

The white monotonous glare of the snow produces blindness, but no one will stay to help one who is thus stricken, for fear of meeting some worse fate himself. If a man is blind, he will be left to wander aimlessly through the snow, calling and raving, until he is overcome by sleep and is buried at length by the still-falling flakes. He will lie there until some wretch, half-mad with cold and hunger, tears away the snow and uncovers his corpse to see if perchance he had a little brandy left in his flask.

The flesh of horses long dead is devoured ravenously ; disease follows and spreads as the clothes of one who has died of it are seized by a comrade who still lives and breathes.

At night they attempt to light fires and search for wood. A fire is kindled, and they huddle round it for warmth and life. In the morning they are found crowded before it, motionless, and with the front of their clothes scorched and burnt. There are times when they find deserted huts, and these, being of wood, make splendid blazes. The sight of the flames drives them to insanity. A man becomes demented, and leaps into the midst of the fire, laughing wildly, and screaming as the flames touch the body. When his comrades drag him out they are glad to find that he is dead, because as such he will mean life to them and they have become indifferent to all else. They continue on their way. They notice that when the artillery is dragged over the road it makes a scrunching sound, and are casually aware that it is because the bones of many dead lie buried there. They cling together at all costs. Men with gaping wounds drag themselves in the rear of their comrades, crying out to them to wait and staining the snow with their chilled, scarlet blood.

Walking is an agony, but they must continue to walk. Their legs and feet become so swollen and blistered that they pull off their boots to give themselves relief. When they try to put them on again they find that it is impossible.

Terrified of being left behind by the others, they proceed barefoot, and their feet cut by the hard, frozen snow and abandoned, buried weapons, would bleed continually save that the blood on them freezes.

They have with them always the terror of the pursued. Many slit their own throats rather than fall into the hands of the Cossacks. Pangs of hunger drive them to madness. They eat the filthy, trodden snow. They are covered with vermin. The frostbite causes their fingers to drop off. Before they die they laugh. A man holds up a hand that has no fingers on it and laughs at it.

They continue to play the rôle of conquerors, and drag their prisoners with them, to their own infinite discomfort. . . .

On the 24th June there crossed the Niemen on their way from France to Russia, 500,000 men. They went out with intent to destroy, and only destruction awaited them.

Russia had refused to uphold the commands of the Emperor Napoleon ; she had neglected to enforce the Continental System, because she insisted that it was ruining her own trade. She was creating danger, and she must be punished for it.

The Grand Army was formed and its soldiers prepared to carry war across the Russian frontier. It has been said that Reason is taking the place of war, but for them war was the outcome of Reason. They were no longer as they had been in their youth, bold, ardent, afire

with reckless bravery and trembling with the desire for sacrifice, but they were sustained by a consciousness of their superiority over the rest of mankind and by the complete fearlessness resultant from such a state.

They walked with the assured step of conquerors, even as the Roman legions might have tramped the earth when Cæsar walked with them and Rome, by the strength of her ever-victorious armies, dominated the world. They went forward with superbly indifferent confidence. They were led to their doom by something more powerful than themselves, but they suffered themselves to be led.

I. Körner

The poet Körner was giving supper in his room to a company of his friends. Among them were Spohr and Schubert. The party was in the nature of a farewell, because Körner was about to become a soldier and fight for the liberation of his country.

"You musicians do not need a fatherland," he said to Spohr, "but we poets must have one."

The supper was a merry one, because the host seemed gay and was excited at the prospect of going to fight. His friends, in a spirit of patriotism, sang his poems round the table until two o'clock in the morning. When they got up to go, he kissed them all, and told them how much he loved them. He said that he would soon come back.

Some months later they heard that he had

been killed by a spent bullet near Gadebusch, but they were glad to know that he had had time to finish his "Das Schwertzleid," as he had written the last stanza on the morning of his death.

II. General Flahault and Some Others

There has been published among the Bowood papers a letter that makes credible the stories that exist of the campaign in Russia and the burning of Moscow.

The French Army marched to invade Russia, and penetrated the country with resolution. The Cossacks retreated before them—always retreated, and would not stay to fight. It was said of them that they never risked a pitched battle unless they were assured of a victory.

Borodino formed the end of this strange march for the pursuing and the pursued, and the slaughter of that day, though its issue was practically indecisive, was called by the French a victory, as it opened to them the gates of Moscow.

The soldiers vied with each other in discovering and pointing out the beauties and enchantments of the city. They admired the houses, which were painted in various colours, and the domes of the buildings, which were covered with iron, silver, and gold. They admitted that they had formerly relegated such terraces, balconies, belfries—especially the belfries—and monuments only to the imagination of the Arabian poets. They found the city deserted and repeated the question continually and at length despairingly to the few remaining inhabitants :

"Where are the *barinas*, your daughters?"

At night the city suddenly and inexplicably burst into fire; from ten successive points flames leaped to the sky. The air was thick with smoke and dark with burning cinders that drifted perilously with the wind. The Emperor was lodged in the Kremlin, which, unknown to him, concealed a powder magazine.

The hospitals, containing some 20,000 wounded, took fire, and there was no one to save them. The buildings that had been the city's pride were undermined and fell crashing to the ground, killing those who stood beneath, and cutting off the escape of others through the streets. Convicts broke loose from their prisons, and the inhabitants of the lowest parts of the city came into the light, robbing and plundering in the burning houses. Any people who might be suspected of having helped to start the conflagration were shot on sight and without mercy.

At one moment the Russian Empire had lain completely in the power of France. Napoleon could have wintered his army in the well-provisioned city of Moscow, and dictated his terms to the Emperor Alexander at leisure. The next, he realized that there was little food in the place, that the country between Moscow and the Niemen was in a state of devastation, that some hundred miles lay between Moscow and Paris, and that winter was closing in; also that his horses were not properly shod for a march through snow.

Some of the French fought the fire with energy. The others, who were not so engaged, said:

"We must have a theatre."

The house of Pozniakoff was chosen, and some actors who had fortunately not left the city were brought together and told to act in a performance. They chose their play, and their audience supplied them with their curtain and also with the necessary costumes, some of which were very fine indeed. A chandelier from a neighbouring church supplied the light, and the evening was voted by all who attended to have been an unqualified success. . . .

The letter itself was, however, written some time after these events, being dated just after the retreat had been accomplished.

Napoleon, crossing the Niemen, knew that his army was destroyed. He said:

"I have needed all my skill and experience to escape."

Brigadier-General Flahault shared in the retreat from Moscow, and here, given in all its simplicity, is an extract from the letter that he wrote to his mother:

"KRASNO,
"16*th November*.

"The Prince and the Emperor are in the best of health, and the Russians, who have been counting on their abominable climate and their savage country for our destruction during the winter, will be fairly astonished, if they refuse to make peace, when they find us taking our revenge on Petersburg next year."

CHAPTER XIX

1813

"*The Proper Study of Mankind——*"

POPE.

NAPOLEON returned from Russia alone, knowing that only a remnant of his once Grand Army could follow him to France, and found, as he had expected, that the news of the catastrophe had become known, that his Empire was being attacked on all sides, and that his statesmen no longer thought it possible for an effective resistance to be offered.

The English army under Wellington, having gained the victory of Vittoria, and thus put an end to the Peninsular War, had passed the Bidassoa, and crossed the Pyrenees; the Austrians had entered Italy; the Allied Army, consisting of 100,000 men, under the leadership of Schwarzenberg, had advanced through Switzerland; 130,000 men, forming the army of Silesia, under the command of Blücher, marched by way of Frankfurt; 130,000 men, the Swedish troops of Bernadotte, had taken possession of Holland and advanced through Belgium.

Napoleon, who throughout the Russian campaign had preserved an inexplicable lethargy, was awakened by this many-sided threat of disaster into a new and terrific spasm of energy. In his

followers he could hope to rouse no more than the courage born of desperation, but for himself he experienced his final moment of confidence.

He set himself to create an army, and in the early days of 1813 he took the field with those veterans of the Grand Army who had survived the retreat from Russia, raw recruits newly joined, and the conscripts of 1815. With these he won his last great victory at the battle of Dresden.

On the 13th October the battle of the Nations was fought round Leipzig, and the French were defeated. They retreated in disorder, leaving behind them wagons, artillery and provisions. The bridges across the rivers had been broken, but, notwithstanding, the soldiers attempted to cross; they trampled each other under water and many were drowned; the remnant passed on in wild confusion, leaving these rivers choked with dead.

The road to France across the Rhine lay open and undefended, and to the Allies regarding it it appeared that they had only to march until they could take possession of Paris, dictate terms to the Emperor of the French, force his abdication, and proclaim to Europe the fall of his Empire.

The Bonapartes

In 1804 Napoleon Bonaparte had crowned himself Emperor of the French and had raised the members of his family to princely rank. In 1813, precisely nine years later, he had occasion

to look for help, and he sought it in every possible quarter, save only from the members of his own family.

His father was dead, having died in Corsica before Napoleon had received his first command. In view of circumstance, his death was perhaps opportune, but it is curious to consider what part he would have played in his son's affairs if he had lived.

In 1813 his wife, Letizia Ramolino, whom Napoleon had caused to be known as Madame Mère, was residing in Paris. Her son had given her a fine house, and as much money as she could require for its upkeep, but Letizia had no influence in the capital or elsewhere, as her stern, uncompromising nature, her unnecessary habits of parsimony, and her frugal way of living had rendered her in the highest degree unpopular with Imperial France.

Turning, then, to Napoleon's eldest brother Joseph, what do we find? Joseph Bonaparte? In 1813 there was, fortunately or unfortunately, no such person. The unhappy Joseph, who had been made King of Spain, had latterly failed in his task of keeping Wellington in check in the Peninsula, had been utterly defeated at Vittoria, had fled the country, had caused Napoleon to observe "Joseph's behaviour has never ceased to bring misfortune upon my Army," and was now living incognito at Mortefontaine in such style as was ordered by his brother the Emperor.

We come, then, to the second brother, younger than Napoleon and, with the exception of him,

perhaps the most talented member of his family. In 1813, the critical year of Napoleon's fortunes, what can be said of Lucien, who, on the 18th Brumaire, had helped to raise him to the position of First Consul, and who in 1804 had been created Prince of Canino? Merely that he was residing in England under "some measure of surveillance," having been banished from France, through a dispute with the Emperor over his marriage, and having been taken prisoner by a British cruiser on his attempting to depart for America.

The next name to be approached is that of Elisa, the eldest of the Bonaparte sisters, who had married the Corsican Bacciochi, and who had been granted by Napoleon the Grand Duchy of Tuscany. In some measure, her character resembled that of Napoleon himself, so that they had found frequent occasions for disagreement, and in 1813 Elisa's interest in Italian affairs had caused her to side with Caroline Murat and her husband, and to aid and abet their schemes against her brother, the Emperor.

In 1795 Napoleon had procured admission for his brother Louis to the Military School at Châlons, and had written thus of him: "I am very pleased with Louis; he fulfils my hopes; intelligence, warmth, good health, talent, good address, kindness—he possesses all these qualities." In 1813 Louis was living in exile in Bohemia, separated from Hortense, his wife and Napoleon's step-daughter, and expelled by Napoleon from his kingdom of Holland, whose

affairs, according to his brother, he had hopelessly mismanaged.

We come now to the two younger Bonaparte sisters, Pauline, the wife of Prince Camillo Borghese, who had received the title of Duchess of Guastalla, and Caroline, the wife of Murat, who had become, through her husband, Grand Duchess of Berg and Cleves and Queen of Naples. In 1813 Pauline had been banished from the Court owing to her treatment of the Empress Marie Louise, and Caroline, having quarrelled with Napoleon, was doing everything in her power to advance the interests of her husband, even at the expense of those of her sorely tried brother.

And, finally, there was Jérôme, the youngest of the family, who had been made King of Westphalia, and for whom Napoleon had always retained a certain measure of fondness. In the campaign of 1812 Jérôme had been charged to carry out an important movement, which might have endangered the southern Russian army. On his failure, due more to deliberate inactivity than to inherent inability, he had been put under the orders of Marshal Davout, and had returned to Cassel, where he remained in 1813, useless and somewhat sulky at the remembrance of his disgrace.

There had been a time, when they had first come from Corsica and faced the prospect of an unending struggle with poverty and obscurity, that the Bonapartes had been a singularly devoted and a singularly courageous family.

In 1813 when they had fallen away from each other, and faced the prospect of poverty and obscurity this time with something like fear, Letizia and Pauline in Paris, Joseph at Mortefontaine, Lucien in England, Elisa in Tuscany, Louis in Bohemia, Caroline in Naples, and Jérôme at Cassel, regarding the last stand of the armies on the borders of France, would say, perhaps in all sincerity, that it was the fault of Napoleon.

CHAPTER XX

1814

Yerba mala no la empece la helada.

SPANISH PROVERB.

IT was on the 31st March that the Emperor of Russia and the King of Prussia rode side by side into the city of Paris amid applause and some discontent. Napoleon was at that time absent from the capital, and the news of its surrender came to him as something of a shock, as it found him in the midst of planning its defence.

Seeing, however, that for the present all effort to regain it would be useless, he put his signature to the blotted paper that was his abdication from the throne of France, and in April betook himself, still with a certain defiance, to his newly founded kingdom of Elba.

TALLEYRAND

On the day that the Allies entered Paris, Napoleon himself being at Fontainebleau and consequently unable to greet his uninvited guests in person, another man took upon himself the duties of host. When the Tsar entered the capital, he was received in due state by Talleyrand, Prince of Benevento, formerly Napoleon's Grand Chamberlain and Minister for Foreign Affairs.

He made of himself a charming host, and greeted his guests with the fine serenity that was habitual to him, and with the same easy air of self-possession that had been his some years ago, when, after the taking of Vienna by the French, he had occupied the palace of the Emperor of Austria and had used his royal box at the theatre.

It is an unpleasant thing for a guest to arrive and feel that he is unexpected, and consequently perhaps unwanted. The Tsar had no reason to complain of his reception. The delightful disposition of M. Talleyrand put him at his ease, and he was tactfully given to understand that he had been expected for years.

M. Talleyrand advocated the return of the Bourbons—perhaps because, coming himself of noble family, he had begun to weary for the society of his own kind.

Hitherto he had lived well, but he believed that it was possible to live better. Under five successive governments he had held office and had distinguished himself. If there was now a certain complacency discernible in his countenance it was because he believed that he had owed his position in life to no one but himself. Had he been given to vulgar boasting, he might have affirmed that he would have risen in any circumstances. Being, however, too fine a person for such gross manifestations, he kept silence, aware that in his very faithlessness he had ever remained faithful to himself.

He was lame and his eyes were blue and his

Paris: Bulloz

TALLEYRAND.

From a painting by Prud'hon

nose turned up. His face was that of a good bishop, expressing complete detachment from the world and its evils ; his clothes were beautiful and he was not in the habit of paying for them. When desperate tradesmen begged him for money, he would reply soothingly, " You shall be paid," and when they said hopefully, " How soon ? " he would reply, " You are very inquisitive."

His life had been a triumph of concealment, and the triumph was not lessened by the fact that the concealment was universally recognized —and not discussed.

There had been few men capable of telling a lie with happier grace than Charles Maurice Talleyrand de Périgord. It is said that practice makes perfect, and in this art he had lacked neither practice nor perfection.

There is a story of an emperor who walked through the streets of his town naked, but declaring that he had on a fine suit of new clothes. All of his courtiers, so the story runs, were afraid of proclaiming the fact of his nudity, lest His Majesty should declare them to be mad. Each, seeing his neighbour keep silent, feared that it was only he who was suffering from the effects of a mental delusion. About the progress of M. Talleyrand through the world of his time there is something peculiarly reminiscent of this story.

He had been primarily educated for the Church, and, possessing an engaging wit, had become Bishop of Autun just before the outbreak

of the Revolution. Four months after his nomination the States-General had met, and he had drawn up a manifesto of the reforms he wished the clergy to undertake. Unfortunately, they had disapproved of him, and disregarded his suggestions, so he had expressed certain offensively constitutional opinions, had succeeded in getting himself excommunicated, and quietly resigned his see of Autun. He had in all things, as someone truthfully remarks, " that moderation which is the characteristic of true philosophy."

His next move had been to enter the diplomatic service, and he had then undertaken a mission to London.

While the French Republican Government had been doing everything in its power to provoke England to war, the spectacle had been witnessed of its representative in London using his every art to keep the two countries at peace. When the Government triumphed by sheer force of numbers and declared war in 1793, Talleyrand, who was an adept at making himself scarce when he thought he might be considered superfluous, had drifted away into the United States.

It had been necessary for him to remain there until the November of 1795.

On his arrival in Paris in that month, he had used his discrimination to some purpose by making friends with the equally discriminating Madame de Staël ; he had been recommended by her to Barras for the position of Minister for Foreign Affairs. This position he had held for

two years, and then, recognizing that the fall of the Directory was imminent and inevitable, he had resigned his office and stood aside to await the rise of the next power.

This had proved to be the General formerly commanding the Army of Egypt.

Talleyrand and he had entered into a secret alliance, and Talleyrand had encouraged him to make a *coup d'état.* He had then packed his clothes and stood ready for instant flight if the blow should fail. The 18th Brumaire being, however, a triumph for Bonaparte, he had thankfully unpacked his belongings, and had been rewarded for his services with the portfolio of Minister for Foreign Affairs under the Consulate.

He had worked brilliantly—if characteristically—always for peace at home and abroad, and in the May of 1805, when the Empire had been declared, Talleyrand had been made Grand Chamberlain with a salary of 500,000 francs.

One thing only had detracted from the complete enjoyment of his position, this being that Napoleon had compelled him to marry Madame le Grand, a divorcée with whom he had long been living, and, as she was a plain creature and without very much brain, he had been inclined, under the Napoleonic régime, to consider her rather as his misfortune than as his fault. He might console himself with his own reflection, that a clever wife can compromise her husband, while a foolish one can only compromise herself.

Save, however, for this trifling domestic inconvenience, he had continued to live in untroubled comfort until 1806, when he had been created Prince of Benevento. He had partaken of his life with a fine enjoyment; Gérard, the pupil of David, had painted his portrait; Dussek had been his private musician. As Foreign Minister he had satisfied Napoleon, who had found that he was one of the few men who could sit up and work into the night as long and as tirelessly as himself.

"After all," he had said, considering the possibility of a change, "Caulaincourt does not write enough, and Murat is a trifle too clumsy and vain."

Talleyrand himself, however, had not approved of Napoleon's foreign policy, and, as he became weary of offering advice that was so frequently ignored, he had resigned his office of Minister in the following year.

Napoleon had retained him in the Council.

He had commenced then a series of intrigues with Austria and Russia, while keeping up an outward demonstration of friendliness with the Emperor. Napoleon had not been deceived, but had shown reluctance to part with his Grand Chamberlain.

Then had followed the Russian disaster and the campaign of 1813.

Napoleon, whose suspicions had become certainties, had informed Talleyrand that he considered him a coward, a traitor, and a thief; a man who had betrayed and deceived every-

one, who would sell his own father, and who did not even believe in God. Between two such men the use of the word " even " is curious.

Talleyrand had listened with the same impassive immobility of countenance that he would have shown could he have heard what Napoleon said of him later, namely, that he was the meanest of usurers, a vile flatterer, a corrupt man who had betrayed all parties and all men ; who consistently treated his enemies as though they might some day become his friends, and his friends as though they were eventually bound to become his enemies.

He had sent in the resignation of his seat in the Council, but the Emperor had refused to accept it.

The Imperialist armies were defeated on all sides, and the victorious Allies entered Paris. Talleyrand, as we have seen, welcomed them with cordiality, entertained the Tsar at his own house, and proposed the return of the Bourbons.

The year 1814 may be considered as the climax of his career ; it was the year in which more faiths were broken, more men deceived and disillusioned, more friendships disgraced, and more lies believed than in any other year of the century. For him, Marmont would say that he had betrayed his Emperor ; to him Ney and Oudinot would owe their traitorous positions ; for him the King of Naples had turned against his brother-in-law ; through him Austria had been enabled to maintain outwardly friendly relations with Napoleon and yet have troops

present against him at the battle of Dresden. He accepted his position with the careless grace that was characteristic of him, and submitted to being compared on all sides to Mephistopheles.

When Louis XVIII returned to the throne of his fathers, he was to make Talleyrand his Minister for Foreign Affairs and representative of France at the Congress of Vienna. The firework of Waterloo was to disturb him not a whit and at the close of the negotiations Louis was to make him his Grand Chamberlain, with an annuity of 100,000 francs.

In 1814 he had twenty more years to live, and his death-bed, which we must give ourselves the pleasure of anticipating, was to be one that was to delight his very soul. He was to burn all his important letters and documents and leave his "memoirs" for future publication. He was to take to his bed, and, like a stray lamb returning to the fold, creep back into the long-suffering arms of the Church, where he breathed his last in peaceful holiness, no one tactlessly calling to mind the scene of Charles II, the Merry Monarch, blessing the bishops of England before he died.

The reigning king was to visit his bedside because he had rendered France such very great services.

Charles Maurice Talleyrand was the eldest son of his father. If he had not been lamed by an accident in his childhood, he would, in the natural course of events, have become a soldier; and if he had become a soldier, endowed with

a degree of physical strength, there would have been very little to distinguish him from the other men of his time.

It has been customary to put him on a different plane, to point out that his cool level-headedness, his subtlety, and his ability to plan out a far-reaching move, separated him from them at the start.

From such an opinion we would beg to differ. Grant him the first two qualities—the last he did not certainly possess—they are not fundamentals; they are solely the outcome of circumstance.

The spirit of his age was manifest in him, even as it was flaunted in the person of Murat. It showed itself in his love of fine things, in his conscious ability to live only in the moment, in his ceaseless thirst for admiration, in his indolence, in his carelessness of detail, and in the easy courage of his bearing.

We may say that he differed from Murat in that he did not require a Talma to give him lessons in deportment.

Events came, and they found him prepared—it was a step in advance of many of his contemporaries—but he did not create events.

Being debarred from entering the battlefield mounted on a war-horse and waving a jewelled cuirass, he had had recourse to subtlety, and sharpened his wits. He made possible the enviable placidity of his death-bed, but he could do no more. He lived, like the others of his time, for his own advancement, and he

gained his object, but there is not one event of any moment in the history of France that owes its being directly to him.

All his life he had wanted peace, but we speak and write of the Napoleonic Wars; he had wished France to be a kingdom, but Napoleon had wished it to be an Empire.

Finally, it may be said of him that he was charmingly witty, that he was plausible, and that he was extremely adroit, but he can never really become more than what he was in 1814, a deputy host receiving another man's guests and arranging with consummate tact where each should sit.

CHAPTER XXI

1815

And who shall bring him to see what shall be after him?
ECCLESIASTES.

ON the 1st March Napoleon, who had been banished to Elba after the defeats he had suffered in 1814, returned to France. On hearing of his approach, Louis XVIII fled from Paris with his family. Napoleon then gathered together his forces to repel the allied armies which were ranged against him in widely separated bodies along the eastern frontier of France. He determined to cut off the English and Prussian armies in Belgium, and defeat them in detail before he turned his attention to the rest of the Coalition.

He failed.

Blücher was repulsed at Ligny, but Ney, whom he had depended upon to stand firm at Quatre Bras, was driven back by Wellington, and the Duke was then able to oppose Napoleon on the field of Waterloo with an undefeated army, and on the 12th June, owing to the timely arrival of Blücher, to bring about the total annihilation of his forces.

On that day more than half a million men perished.

The Bourbons returned to Paris, and the

Congress of Vienna finished its work of re-establishing the boundaries of the European states that had lately been so rudely broken and pushed aside.

During the Hundred Days there were in France four distinct classes of men : those who had voted for the abdication of Napoleon in 1814, and allied themselves with Louis XVIII, and who in 1815 deserted the King and allied themselves again with the Emperor ; those who worked for their own ends independently, and who, having deserted Napoleon in 1814, did not again swear allegiance either to him or to the Bourbons ; those who remained faithful to the cause of Napoleon throughout ; and those who having abandoned it in 1814, and adopted that of the Bourbons, could not bring themselves in 1815 to make the double betrayal of taking up again the thing that they had renounced.

I. Ney

The same man who had been the means of bringing Bertrand and Montholon to their positions of isolated grandeur as the guardians of his dead body, and other men to their sudden and violent deaths on the field of Waterloo, was also the means of bringing one man to his death in the Luxembourg Gardens on the cold morning of the 7th December. This was Michel Ney, Duke of Elchingen and Prince of Moscow, who, after having deserted the cause of Louis XVIII that he had adopted in 1814, in favour of that of Napoleon, had commanded

the cavalry at Waterloo, and who, having afterwards surrendered himself into the hands of the Bourbons, had been sentenced by them to be shot.

In the face of Eternity he displayed a certain resolute resignation which was at once futile and magnificent, and which might be considered totally inexplicable.

He died to save no cause ; his death served no great purpose, and he was conscious of it. When he looked back on his life he could see not one thing that would appear to justify his having lived it. His titles, of which he had been proud and which had stood for the victories that he had won and the battlefields where he had triumphed, were as the dust at his feet.

He had few friends, and his enemies did not fear him ; they had declared that he had done them greater harm by surrendering himself to them, than he had done by fighting against them. He could not claim to be a victim martyred to their revenge, because they had never desired his blood ; he could not claim to have sacrificed himself, for sacrifice requires an ideal, and, like his comrades, he had worshipped first liberty, later law, and finally glory, and none of these things were left to him now.

He had no powerful Socratian intellect to sustain him or to enable him to scorn the world that he was leaving, and he had nothing of that inward loftiness of spirit that could bring to him the calm of pity and forgiveness. He had

little to incline him towards the comforts either of philosophy or of religion.

He could not feel that his was a justly deserved punishment, for he had no respect for the men who inflicted it on him. Fouché and Talleyrand had signed the decree for his arrest, and when he had seen the men who were to try him he had exclaimed :

" I thought to have been among judges, but I perceive here none but executioners."

It was impossible for him to see justice in a court which condemned him for the rebellious and traitorous exploits of which he had been guilty, while such men as Macdonald, Marmont, Oudinot, and Moncey went free and untried. And yet, while knowing himself to be no worse than they, he could feel himself to be no better.

The thought of an escape from death or from captivity could bring him no hope, for he realized that in the world now there was no place for such as he, and that if he lived there would be nothing left for him to accomplish or to gain. He was not of noble birth and there existed in him no pride of race to give him courage. He was forty-six years old, too young to be weary of his existence, too old to abandon it with that fierce and almost joyous fanaticism which can be the prerogative of extreme youth.

He could not admire himself ; he could hope to have no name to be admired by posterity. He had twice played the traitor ; he had twice broken faith with those who trusted in him. Dying, he could see no hope of ultimate salvation

for the country that he, in company with some poor misguided compatriots, had loved and betrayed.

The weather was bad, and a carriage took him to the place of his execution. Arrived there, he got out and asked where he was to stand. The place was indicated to him. He declined to kneel down and also to have his eyes bandaged. He faced the muskets levelled at him, took off his hat, and gave the word to fire. He may be said to have justified the title given to him by the man who had brought him to this place. Napoleon had called him "the bravest of the brave."

II. Murat

"Pizzo,
"*13th October.*

"My Dear Caroline,

"My last hour has come. In a few minutes I shall have ceased to live; in a few minutes you will no longer have a husband. Never forget me; my life has not been stained with any injustice. Adieu, my Achille; adieu, my Letitia; adieu, my Louise. Show the world that you are worthy of me. I leave you without a kingdom and without resources in the midst of my enemies. Show yourselves superior to misfortune; think of what you are and what you have been, and God will bless you. Do not speak ill of my memory. I declare that my greatest sorrow in the last moments of my life is to die far from my children."

Such was the last letter written by Murat, once King of Naples, to his wife, an hour before the time of his execution at Pizzo.

Its every line is characteristic of himself: it is entirely inarticulate; it has about it the curiously bombastic sound of a proclamation; it has an air of absolute self-consciousness; it is the final and somewhat pathetic exposition of the spirit of the man who, throughout his life, had been capable of completely putting from him his own natural thoughts and feelings, if he believed that by doing so he could command even for a moment the interest and admiration of a public.

When he had finished writing it, he regarded the paper before him for a moment, and then signed his name to it with deliberation. Cutting off a curl of his hair he folded it in with it and, turning to the Neapolitan officer who stood beside his chair, asked him to see that it was directed to his wife.

He knew at that time that he had about half an hour more to live.

To be shot thus by a file of grenadiers in his own kingdom was a very different fate from the one he had imagined for himself.

Just three years ago he had been King of Naples, and wild dreams were forming in his head of a free and united Italy with himself at its head. Napoleon would have attacked him! . . . Italy would have risen at his word! . . . Austria and Russia would have joined him! . . . Napoleon would have been humiliated! . . .

He would have been hailed as the saviour of Europe ! . . . The nations bathing his hands with their grateful tears ! . . . All the world ! . . .

In the midst of his vague, enormous dreams, he had been summoned to Paris. France had declared war against Russia. Murat was to command the cavalry.

The near prospect of a fight had filled him with a joyous excitement, and he had set himself to design a new costume for the occasion. A blue tunic with gold lace, a crimson velvet fur-lined pelisse with breeches to match, long yellow riding boots, an embroidered cross-belt for his diamond-hilted sword, and an embroidered holster for his jewel-butted pistols, a three-cornered hat with ostrich plumes and an aigrette fastened with a diamond buckle.

He would make a glorious figure to head a charge. People cheered him wherever he appeared. Marshal Macdonald remarked that these cheers " were called forth rather by the extraordinary costume he wore than by any respect for his person," but, at all events, he was cheered.

His costume had been glorious and complete, but the campaign itself had brought him no joy.

The advance on Moscow, following the maddening, incomprehensible retreat of the Cossacks, during which time, with a sort of fateful premonition, he declared that the cold was killing his horses, the horrible day of Borodino, the arrival at the great abandoned city, the hectic nights of the fire, the torturing period of in-

decision, and then the full heart-breaking terror of the retreat, left him puzzled and dismayed. At Smorgoni, when the Emperor had gone on alone to Paris, leaving him in sole command of the Army, he had felt the responsibility was too much for him, and had fled away to Naples in ashamed haste.

The dreams that he had imagined seemed to be regarding him from afar off, and with a certain mockery.

He quarrelled with Napoleon and involved himself in dark intrigues against him, but, when the Emperor called him to his side for the last time, he went and fought for him in the Leipzig campaign wholeheartedly and with his customary ardour.

At the back of his mind the question hovered unrecognized and so unanswered:

" What shall I do if the Empire falls ? "

Napoleon was defeated before he could decide it, and it was in a maze of angry bewilderment and thinking to save his throne that he had attempted to join forces with the Coalition.

He was then accounted a deserter, and, as one of the Emperor's former lieutenants, the Allies decided that he would be an impossible master of Italy. They turned against him and he was attacked on all sides.

He determined to meet his enemies in open warfare, and collected an army of his Neapolitans with which to defeat the combined English, Austrian and Sicilian forces. In the position of an independent commander he had rarely been

successful. His soldiers deserted him. Even to himself he refused to admit that he had been hopelessly outgeneralled.

He returned to Naples defeated and pursued, and on the night of the 19th May, he crept out of his palace, dressed as a civilian, with his money and his precious diamonds sewn into his clothes. The element of adventure in his flight had not failed even then to appeal to him. He escaped into the dark, and with six companions put out to sea in a fishing boat. He was utterly alone. Bonapartists and Royalists alike regarded him as a traitor; only his personal friends clung to him.

In the south of France, where he landed, he had wandered about, deserted and afraid, sleeping in the open fields and begging his food at houses where he thought there was little likelihood of his being recognized.

At Bordeaux he read an account of Waterloo in a newspaper.

And then at last he hit upon a brilliant and triumphant idea, for the failure of which he was still unable to account.

He sailed to Corsica, and there, as he had expected, found friends and supporters. He had decided to make an attempt to reconquer Naples, where the people had loved him. Armed recruits and discontented Liberals threw in their lot with him recklessly, and on the 29th September he set sail for the Neapolitan coast.

He had landed at Pizzo and, dressed in colonel's uniform, wearing a three-cornered hat

adorned with a Neapolitan cockade and a cluster of diamonds, entered the town.

It was market day, and the streets were crowded. Murat's companions cried :

" Long live King Joachim."

And the people, far from appearing enthusiastic, were seized by a sort of amazed affright, and set fiercely on the King and his courtiers, armed with sticks and stones.

The royal party fled to the sea, only to find that their ship had deserted them and sailed away. They turned inland, separated in panic, and were hunted down in twos and threes, captured, and taken torn and dishevelled to be imprisoned in a room of the castle.

Murat had been condemned to death by a court martial and he had heard the words pronounced, " exciting to civil war, and appearing in arms against the King of the Two Sicilies."

Recollections covering the space of years do not occupy more than a few moments of time.

Murat raised his head from his letter and saw that, besides the soldiers, there was in the room an old man wearing the cassock of a priest, whose face, with its expression of serene benevolence, was familiar to him.

Murat got up uncertainly and came towards him.

" Sire," the priest said, and at the thought that by some he was still accounted a king the prisoner's heart must have leapt within him, " do you remember that two years ago you gave me alms for the poor and money for my church ?"

"I remember it," replied Murat slowly, and still unenlightened.

"Sire," said Canon Masadea, "I come now to ask you for a much more important favour."

Murat was puzzled, but recollected suddenly the cluster of diamonds that he had had fastened in his hat.

"What is it?"

"I wish you to make a confession," said the priest.

Murat drew back. So that was it. This priest had been sent to try and force him into an admission that his punishment was just. He would have none of it.

"That is impossible——" he began, and paused at the look of comprehension that came into the priest's eyes.

"Sire, I am not speaking of a judicial confession, but of a sacramental one to reconcile you with God, before whom you are going to appear at the end of the next quarter of an hour."

"Oh, I see!"

There was a pause. Murat was slightly embarrassed. Presently he said:

"Well, I am ready now, but how can it be done? There isn't much time."

The officer who was to command the firing party here interrupted with the remark that there was no time, as five minutes of the fifteen had already gone. The priest turned to him:

"The quarter of an hour must not even begin until I have given my penitential absolution.

No power on earth will prevent me from doing my duty. If you interfere with me, I shall appeal to God against such treatment ! "

The officer retired abashed and amazed at such vehemence, and the priest, turning towards the prisoner, said to him :

" I am here for your sake. Do not fear anything."

Murat drew up a chair for him, and sat down beside him somewhat awkwardly, to begin his confession. He was unaccustomed to such scenes, because in the Grand Army there had been no chaplain.

After a little time he fell upon his knees.

When he arose a few minutes later he had received absolution and recovered his composure. He raised his voice :

" Now let us go, and God's will be done."

The priest detained him still another moment.

" Will you not state in writing that you mean to die as a Christian ? "

Again Murat hesitated. His suspicions returned. The priest was trying to gain some admission from him that he would use later as a weapon for his political enemies.

" Do you want to dishonour me after I am dead ? "

The old man looked at him.

" I wish to have evidence that will confound those who will misrepresent you."

Murat took up his pen, thought for a moment, and then wrote on a piece of paper, " Je meurs un bon Chrétien."

He handed the statement gravely to his confessor.

"Now let us go, and God's will be done," he said, and the repetition of the phrase pleased him as much as it had done at first.

The officer who had been rebuked came in, and now with a certain diffidence requested Murat to follow him. They stepped out into the castle yard, where there were twelve men ranged under the command of a sergeant. A sudden light broke over Murat's face, that since his confession had been overshadowed. There were twelve men to see him die; he must make a good spectacle for them.

He went and set his back against the wall. The yard was so narrow that the soldiers' muskets almost touched his breast. He placed his left hand at his side to indicate the position of his heart.

"Fire!" he said, and the boldness of a lifetime rang in his tone. "Spare the face, but fire at the heart!"

It is strange to think that as he lived his life slowly minute by minute there were times when it must have seemed to him a serious and perhaps a tragic thing.

III. Brune

It was two months after Waterloo had been fought and Napoleon had been defeated.

On the 2nd August Marshal Brune drove into the town of Avignon and stopped outside the door of the Hôtel du Palais Royal to change

horses. He was alone save for two officers, as his escort had been left behind at the Pont du Bompas with orders to follow him later.

The Marshal was on his way to Paris, having just given up the command that he had held throughout the Hundred Days—that of the troops of Provence, who had been charged to withstand the invasion of the Austro-Anglican armies. He had remained in Napoleon's service in 1814 as well as in 1815, though during the greater part of the Emperor's reign he had been in disgrace for some offence committed in 1805.

He had about him an air of nobility, but it was remembered that he had been the friend of Danton.

As the carriage drew up the Marshal observed that there was a crowd of the townspeople assembled round the door, who were regarding him with very threatening looks. He recollected that Avignon, the Papal city, had been noted always as a Royalist stronghold.

He was in uniform and made no attempt to disguise himself.

As soon as he made his appearance at the window, he heard a single voice cry out :

" Death ! "

And the cry was taken up :

" Death to the assassin ! It was he who carried the head of the Princesse de Lamballe on the end of his pike ! "

Tumult broke out and shouts full of menace resounded.

The Marshal remained calm, seeing that it was useless to state that in the September of '92 he had been absent from Paris.

The proprietor of the hotel, horrified at the disturbance, went to warn the Prefect of Vaucluse, who came, and by virtue of his office, succeeded in quieting the mob, and letting the carriage proceed on its way.

The road that the Marshal followed lay for a quarter of a league under the walls of the town. The people, determined not to be robbed of their prey, followed a short cut, came up with the carriage, stopped it, and dragged it back in triumph to the hotel.

The Marshal gained entrance to one of the rooms on the first floor ; the crowd remained outside, hesitant.

Their indecision lasted no more than a moment. The troops of the National Guard came up, but only to join forces with the mob. The gendarmes who showed themselves for an instant were soon put to flight.

The people appeared to take resolve.

One man moved and the whole crowd surged forward.

They burst into the hotel and pressed up the stairs ; reached the room of Marshal Brune, battered down the door, and paused on the threshold filled with an excitement now bordering on frenzy, and a strange and almost fearful expectation.

It was as though for a moment they had become afraid of themselves.

The Marshal was writing a letter in haste because he knew that the time was short. Leaving it unfinished, he got up and came towards them, and they saw that he was unarmed.

"What do you want?"

Their voices rose up at him clamorous and incoherent, yet distinct, for they spoke as with the thought of a single man.

He listened and then suddenly opened his coat. He became filled with a profound impatience.

"Strike!" he said, and at the sound in his voice the crowd moved forward and then stopped short.

A man less sensible to it than his fellows stepped up and slashed him across the cheek. Another, seeing it, brought down the butt of his pistol on his head, and then the rabble burst in. . . .

The next day the body was prepared for burial, but the people came back to it again, and, inspired now by a sort of fury that he had died so easily, took it from the hotel.

They opened the coffin, carried it to the Rhone and flung it into the water. The coffin sank, but when the corpse rose to the surface, they riddled it with bullets. On one of the beams of the bridge a wit, struck by a happy thought, inscribed the words:

"This is the cemetery of Marshal Brune!" and had the satisfaction of making his comrades laugh very much.

IV. Berthier

The Château of Bamberg overlooks the road. On the 1st June a regiment of Russian cavalry was passing down it and a man stood by one of the windows in the topmost story of the house, and watched their slow advance, until they were out of sight.

The Russians formed part of the army that was marching to invade France, and the man at the window was Louis Alexandre Berthier.

He was at that time sixty-three years of age and his hair was turning grey. He was thinking of the nights that he had spent with Napoleon in the old campaigning days when he had travelled in the Emperor's carriage and had often sat up with him into the small hours of the morning, busied with maps, plans, and orders given and received. Since General Bonaparte had first been placed in command of the army of Italy, Berthier had acted as his Chief-of-Staff, and in his earnest, zealous, painstaking fashion he had served his master well. And now France was being invaded by her enemies and he was standing inactive by a window, watching them pass below him.

There was a pride, wholly free from vanity, in his consciousness of what his inactivity might mean to France—and to Napoleon. Many of his contemporaries had disliked him, because they knew that they had reason to be jealous of him. They had pointed out to the Emperor that he was harsh, overbearing, full of pride

and pretension, and ruined by a pronounced indecision of character.

He had lacked the high military ability of Soult, the adventurous ambition of Bernadotte, the heroism of Lannes, and the fine unshakable strength of Davout, but, despite his faults and deficiencies, he had been more to Napoleon than all these, because he had had the supreme ability to carry out to the last letter the orders that he had received.

In 1804 his name had headed the list of marshals ; in 1806 he had been created Duke of Valengin and Prince of Neufchâtel ; in 1807 he had been Chief Ranger and Vice-Constable of the Empire ; and in 1809 he had been created Prince of Wagram.

He would have made an excellent bank clerk, and he had found himself a prince. He had striven to fill his great positions ; he had laboured not to disgrace his titles. There had been a time when he could look on his past without remorse and on his future without foreboding. Sincerely, and with comparative disinterestedness, he had worked very hard. The Grand Army of 1812 had appeared to him a creation of unrivalled splendour. It had consisted of 150,000 men and an Austrian army had protected its right and a Prussian army its left. He had acted as its Major-General.

It had seemed impossible then to imagine that it could meet with disaster, and even after its retreat from the flames of Moscow, he had been unable to believe that its destruction was complete.

He had retained his faith in its commander. He had fought for him in Germany in 1813, and in France in 1814—significant dates and positions—and he had not been convinced of the futility of his proceedings, until Paris had surrendered to the Allies and, with the collapse of his Empire, Napoleon had abdicated and retired to Elba.

Berthier could remember now that he had felt himself then to be disillusioned and lost. In a moment every support on which he had conscientiously built up his life had been swept away from him. A vision of rest after the weariness of his labour could not appeal to him. He had snatched at what had seemed the only chance of escape from the obscurity and banishment which the mode of life of his age had taught him to fear, and when King Louis XVIII made his solemn entry into the capital of France, Berthier had been one of those who had walked submissively in his train.

He had despaired of Napoleon's return—indeed the possibility of such an event had not at that time even entered his mind.

And then, after what had seemed a very little while, the Emperor on Elba had begun to correspond with him and to inform him of his plans and projects for the near future.

The full horror of the position in which he stood had been brought home to him then, and it had appalled him.

Napoleon and Louis both trusted in him, and he must betray either his Emperor or his King.

To the one he owed everything ; to the other nothing but the honourable allegiance that he had vowed and that it was now impossible for him to withhold.

His simple and straightforward mind had seen no other course save that of prolonged hesitation, and this had brought on him the distrust of both.

He felt that it was in a measure deserved, and the knowledge that nearly all his companions were taking advantage of their positions could bring him no consolation. He saw them all deserting the cause of the Bourbons and flocking towards the eagles of Napoleon and was unable to follow their example. He knew what the loss of his services would mean to the Emperor in the coming campaign : he knew that Soult, who was to take his place as Chief-of-Staff, had had practically no experience of staff work, and yet he could not bring himself to fight against Louis, to whom he had so recklessly pledged his services. Whichever course he took now would be a betrayal of one of his friends, and to stand here and watch these Russians winding their slow way through an undefended country was a betrayal of himself, and horrible.

There was no escape.

In the room behind him, he heard the laughing voices of his children, and thought, with the hope of every generation, that is at heart so egotistical, that they would perhaps grow up into an age when such decisions would not be necessary. The life that he had been called upon to live had left him unprepared for this moment, and

the immense possibilities of his present situation were beyond the little circle of his understanding.

He put out his hand, unlatched the window and threw it wide. When his body was lifted a few minutes later from the stones below it was found that he was dead.

About the manner of the death of a man who had lived a life full of such conscientious endeavour there is something that would be terrifying and mysterious, did it not hold also something tangible and something of a spirit of intentional order.

CHAPTER XXII

1816

For each age is a dream that is dying
Or one that is coming to birth.
ARTHUR O'SHAUGHNESSY.

THE year 1816 may be regarded for France either as a commencement or as a conclusion.

Regarded as the one, it abounds in facts of interest and significance; regarded as the other, it has a strange emptiness, and, after twenty-five years' furious strife, an unusual calm. It is the calm arising not from contented repose, but from unutterable weariness.

The last quarter of a century had comprised a gigantic spasmodic effort, embodying the energy of a generation. In 1816 it seemed impossible that such an effort could ever again be put forth. A sense of powerlessness made itself felt; a lassitude crept over the most defiant of spirits; they received it almost with thankfulness.

The study of those past twenty-five years is absorbing because in that little space of time it is permitted to see in all its entirety a phase of progress, the impulses which gave rise to it, its necessity and inevitability, the attempts made in it to reach a summit of perfection, their failure and despairing cessation, and its close

in a state of disillusionment and discontent that must of itself have given rise in the phase that followed it to renewed endeavours on the part of men to better their condition, and, profiting by the experiences of their predecessors, to advance one step further along their progressive road. It becomes at once apparent that progress is not to be accomplished in a straight and steady course, but rather in a series of surrenders and violent recoveries.

Men since the moment of their creation have advanced, and will continue to advance, and the personal retrogression of an individual can in no way hinder, but rather may be the means of furthering their advancement. A man is put into the world to fulfil a certain purpose; he may fulfil it in any way that he pleases, but in spite of himself and the desires and passions that he may entertain, and be he in ignorance of it or no, that purpose for which he was put into the world will inevitably be fulfilled. His individual nature is of no account save to himself and to his immediate contemporaries.

In each one of these twenty-five years, events occurred which brought into prominence men who could in no sense lay claim to goodness and yet whose violent unpremeditated actions combined to bring about results which would have astonished and bewildered them, and which they would have been utterly incapable of having conceived of themselves.

They were a generation that had appeared to give birth to itself at the close of the Revolu-

tion—a generation that only the Revolution had rendered possible, and which was the unknowing means of perfecting to a degree the aims of the First Republic.

The Revolution which to-day fills the world with a sense of its stupendous potency had occupied in all the space of five years. Considered as apart from its immediate eventual results, it had been unsuccessful. With a little time its nobler spirits had perished in a confusion of terror, fury, ambition, and remorse, and the weaker spirits that, because of their very weaknesses, had remained unimperilled, had sunk into a kind of voluptuous apathy, from which they could find no energy to arouse themselves.

The new generation was formed of men who, having lived throughout the years of the Revolution without taking any very leading part in its affairs, had escaped alike the fate of the Republican leaders, who had perished under the knife of the guillotine, and the fate of those who had survived and had lived to learn a stern lesson from the apparently unavailing destinies of these victims.

The experience of the Revolution had left them with few illusions as to the intrinsic goodness of mankind, and it had been the means of depriving them of all force of idealism. It had left them with nothing to depend upon save faith in the power of their own personal strength, mental or physical, with nothing to guard or defend but their own immediate and materialistic interests and possessions, and with

nothing to live for save an intense and natural enjoyment of their own lives.

Many of them had been soldiers to whom the Revolution had given opportunity to rise in their profession, and, coming often from the depths of poverty and meanness, they had all the ruder strong characteristics of those who have risen from low states unaided save by their own efforts. Because they had been witness to the deaths of so many of their contemporaries, their hold on life had been very strong, and for that same reason they had had little fear of death. The simplicity of their attitude towards what to others forms the complex, spiritual problem of their existence, which was as natural to them as it was unconscious, had given them a certain strength to face the world which had been invaluable to them in the continuous struggle that had formed their lives.

Throughout the rule of the Consulate and the Empire, there had been in every man's mind one thought, and one thought only—"Myself." The thought, at first an instinct that fear had implanted there during the years of the Revolution, had been fostered under the Consulate Government by the rise to power, apparently unaided save by their own merits and ambitions, of certain hitherto insignificant men, and it had been finally rendered habitual by the unashamed recognition of the consciously egotistical aims of the Empire. Throughout those twenty-five years there had been a commonly felt understanding that every man must

work for himself, fight for himself, and rise by himself, not aided by his friends, but hindered and maligned by his rivals, as one man's disgrace would mean another's promotion.

However undesirable it might be in itself, the greedy spirit of competition thus prevalent throughout all ranks had made for the cultivation of that efficiency which was so essential a feature of the Napoleonic system. It is not to be thought, however, that by thus putting from them all ideals of personal goodness, friendship, and obligation, these men had thereby rendered the age they lived in one of cynicism. To be cynical is one of the most obvious confessions of fear, and is among the first defences adopted by those who are afraid of being betrayed by a display of their own emotions. It is, therefore, the very young who would be cynical, and also the very old. But those who live their lives in the midst of danger, revolution, and great disordered passion have no time for the cultivation of cowardice or of cynicism; also they take pleasure in any fine possessions they may procure for themselves, knowing that these, being inanimate things, will not be inspired by envy or malice to destroy them or take away from them their great positions.

The Napoleonic age was the age of materialism. It resembled to a striking degree the age of the Roman domination of the world. In both these phases men retained their enthusiasm for things material at an age when most men have lost their faculty to enthuse over anything, and the

importance and significance of these things gained tenfold in the face of the world because of this ripe enthusiasm of theirs.

But men who live to adapt themselves unreservedly to the conditions of a materialistic age are the surest means of bringing about their own downfall. Inevitably they lose the power of foresight, and so it had been with these.

In their lives they had won much, and the necessary endeavours to protect and defend that which they had won absorbed their forces. At the same time they had felt themselves compelled to push their conquests farther, so that their weariness might not become known.

Their very display of strength had made known their weakness. When they perished, they had been as kings buried under the gilded walls of their overweighted and ill-founded palaces. Unknown to themselves, the purpose of their lives revealed itself. They had commenced their careers with the intent to carry liberty, if necessary, on the sharp points of their swords to all the enslaved countries of Europe. Europe had refused and defended herself against the proffered gift, and, in place of liberators and law-givers, they had become conquerors and tyrants. They had subjected Europe to forms of oppression far more heavy than those of her former serfdom, and they had driven her to resist them. In 1793 she had made no response to the calls from France to rise against her oppressors ; in 1814 she had risen against them of her own will, and had come near to finding,

for the first time, her own liberty. In ridding herself of the yoke of the Napoleonic Empire that had lain on her for ten years, she had commenced also to cast aside the yoke of an ancient and tyrannous nobility that she had borne for centuries.

We all know the conditions general in eighteenth-century Europe and have compared them with those prevalent in the nineteenth century. Between the two, dividing them and complete in itself, resulting from the one and being responsible for the other, lies the Napoleonic Era. It is the men of that time who form the link between the old acceptance of a feudal aristocracy that was then fast diminishing and the new spirit of democracy that even to-day is fast expanding itself.

But for them, after 1815 their work was accomplished. In the new phase that opened then for civilization, there was no place for such as they, and, with a certain justice, the realization of this was brought home to them. Their own downfall rendered everything in their minds turmoil and confusion. They had always lived unthinkingly, and they could not then learn to think. They committed the foolish action of despair. They perished, some by their own hands, some by the hands of others, and those that survived lived only that they could die.

They went from the world seeing nothing of salvation before them, leaving behind them nothing but the memory of the lives they had lived with such joyous, relentless intensity, and

yet to-day we may be amazed at the works these blind, violent men wrought when they thought themselves to be struggling only for the advancement of their own great purposes.

Augereau

On the 12th June, 1816, Pierre François Charles Augereau, who had been a Marshal of France and Duke of Castiglione under the Empire, died at his estate of La Houssaye, deprived of his military title and of his pension. He was fifty-nine years of age, and in 1807 he had received a wound, from the effects of which he had never completely recovered. The last years of his life had been passed in disgrace, because in 1814 he had deserted Napoleon and allied himself with the Bourbons, and in 1815, when he had attempted to rejoin Napoleon and had been repulsed on the charge of his traitorous conduct, he had again endeavoured to find favour with Louis XVIII.

When the Napoleonic Empire is considered, let it be considered also that it was with such men as Augereau that it was perforce built up, and when the Napoleonic Era is considered and condemned, let it be remembered that its originator could look chiefly for help in its creation only to such men as Augereau.

The portraits of the Duke of Castiglione show him as having been tall and commanding in person, with a small head and a dark, shrewd face. In Lefebvre's picture of him, he wears a powdered wig and clothes that ill become him,

because in their grandeur there has been attempted something of the aristocrat.

Perhaps he was not solely to blame for the seeming deterioration of his character. When the events and circumstances of his life are dated, they have a peculiar significance.

He had been the son of a servant and a fruiterer, and had early enlisted in the Army. The Revolution had brought him promotion, and he had been transferred to the Army of Italy. Bonaparte had approved of him and had said :

" He has plenty of character, courage, firmness, activity ; is inured to war ; is well liked by the soldiery ; is fortunate in his operations."

In the years that followed he had distinguished himself and won a certain measure of renown, and in 1808 he had received his title.

But when in 1810 he had been transferred to Catalonia, he had gained a reputation for cruelty.

From that time on his abilities had perceptibly lessened. His conduct in the Russian campaign of 1812 had shown that he could no longer be accounted a commander of any particular merit ; in Saxony in 1813 his presence with the Army had become practically negligible.

When before the battle of Leipzig, Napoleon had reproached him with the words, " You are no longer the Augereau of Castiglione," he had replied rudely, but with a flash of insight that held a counter-accusation : " Give me back the old soldiers of Italy and I will show you what I am ! "

CHAPTER XXIII

1817

We must abridge these duties to the dead,
Who will not mind be they abridged or no.
THOMAS HARDY.

IN 1817 a book appeared entitled *A History of Italian Painting*. Its author was Alexander Cæsar Bombet, and its dedication was to "His Majesty Napoleon the Great." Two years after Waterloo neither the book nor its dedication created the faintest stir in literary or political circles: 1815 seemed then as far removed as 1840, and Alexander Cæsar Bombet had not yet become Stendhal.

MASSÉNA

It was in the April of 1817 that Masséna, once accounted one of the greatest men in France, died in a position of obscure poverty, and was buried in the graveyard of Père-la-Chaise.

It was to Masséna that Napoleon had given the name "Dear Child of Victory"; and it would be scarcely an exaggeration to affirm that in face of an enemy Masséna had been as great a general as Napoleon. He was bold, active and courageous; his work had been accomplished with energy, and he had taken a certain delight in it.

He had won success at the battles of Saorgio,

Loano, and Rivoli. He had commanded the Army in Switzerland, and acquitted himself in such a manner that people had said of him that he could have accomplished the Revolution of the 18th Brumaire.

In 1800 his celebrated defence of Genoa had been largely responsible for the success of Bonaparte's plans at Marengo.

In 1805 he had defeated the Austrians at Caldiero. In 1806 he had taken possession of Naples for Jérôme Bonaparte.

In 1809 he had distinguished himself at Landshut and at Eckmühl.

At the battles of Aspern and Essling it was he who had saved the French Army from what might have been its death-blow at the hands of the Austrians. At Wagram, though too ill to ride, he had contributed to the victory by directing, from his carriage, the movements of the Army's right wing.

In Spain, though actually unsuccessful in the task allotted to him by Napoleon, he had done what few others in his position could have done. He had kept his army up with Wellington's position for the whole of five months ; in the terrible retreat through devastated and hostile country which followed, he had succeeded in keeping his men together, and at Fuentes d'Oñoro he had very nearly succeeded in defeating the Duke.

His failure he had been able to ascribe to the unruliness and deliberate disobedience of his subordinates, Ney, Reynier, and Junot.

However, after this work in Spain, he had been recalled and had found Napoleon to be displeased with him. He had been given a territorial command at Marseilles and saw no more service in the field. Under such treatment as this, one of the greatest of French marshals had remained silent and unrevengeful ; there is no proof of the rumour that he entered into communication with Fouché and the old republicans. When the Bourbons returned to France, he had been confirmed in his command, and when Napoleon returned from Elba, he remained quietly at Marseilles to await the turn of events, thus strengthening the Bourbons in their position without injuring Napoleon.

After the second Restoration, he was summoned to sit on the court martial that was to try Marshal Ney, but this, out of loyalty to a former brother-in-arms, he refused to do. He thus set the royalists against him. He felt that he was growing old, and by maligning, injuring, and tormenting him on all sides, his enemies hastened him to his grave.

He had been Grand Marshal of France, he had been decorated with the Eagle of the Legion of Honour, he had been created Duke of Rivoli and Prince of Essling, and yet the tombstone erected for him in 1817 bears nothing but the one word " Masséna," even as it would have done had this son of a wine-merchant died in the poor state in which he had been born.

Napoleon's tombstone on St. Helena was to bear not even the letters of his name, but to-day

he lies in Paris under the dome of the Invalides in a tomb that is said to be worthy of him. Remembering his career, which has in it all the elements of greatness, both of glory and of self-sacrifice, what is it that would have rendered Masséna completely unworthy of such a tomb?

Quite simply, it is the lack of all ambition for its possession.

Masséna had lived only as his birth, his upbringing, and his age rendered it possible that he should live. Until 1815 he had considered neither the future nor the past; he had used the present with the most complete recklessness, and he had found pleasure in it. He was fearless, not because he was more brave than other men, but because he was less far-sighted than they. He was rude, unprincipled, and unbridled. He had surrendered himself willingly to the demands of an age of materialism. He had seen no necessity to exercise self-control, neither had he seen any pleasure to be derived from it, and his life had been governed by the dictates of the two essentials, "necessity" and "pleasure." In all these things he resembled his contemporaries, and, being first and foremost a creation, he bore a certain resemblance to his creator. One thing had separated him from them, and had caused them to regard him with a certain degree of contempt.

Napoleon, who in any direct exposition of his own ideas was almost always ridiculous, said of him that he was "full of ambition and self-satisfaction." For a single man to be

possessed of both is an impossibility. Masséna possessed the self-satisfaction that is the result of total lack of ambition. The smaller men of the Empire, Suchet, Oudinot, and Brune, had liked him ; Ney, Berthier, Junot, and Bessières had disliked him because they could not understand him. In him lack of ambition did not signify humility, but rather profound indolence ; it did not signify virtue, but rather a most intense desire for the pursuit of pleasure. His pleasure had been partaken of neither to command popular admiration nor to attain fame.

Greatness has been defined by Hazlitt as great strength producing great effects. In Masséna lay strength, but it was beyond his power, because it was not his inclination to produce effects. He was not incapable of producing effects. In 1800 when he made no attempt to place himself at the head of a Consular Government, it was ascribed to his natural honesty and sincere adherence to the Republic. Four years later, finding that under the Empire a marshalship entailed no particularly arduous duties, and carried with it an annuity of 500,000 francs, he expressed a willingness, so pronounced that it might almost be termed eagerness, to become a marshal.

In Spain, where he attributed his lack of success to the conduct of Ney, Reynier, and Junot, the three Marshals explained their behaviour by the statement that the open scandals of Masséna's private life had been a disgrace to the Army and a cause for much resentment on the part of their wives. Public opinion supported the Marshals.

After the Spanish adventure, when he perforce went into retirement, he was a rich man, and he found idleness no trial to him, since it did not of necessity bring with it lack of pleasant occupation or of interest. When Napoleon returned from Elba his attitude of dignified aloofness was somewhat spoilt by a letter which his old master, remembering his character, saw fit to write to him, in which he expressed his regrets at seeing him prevented " by his health " from making the campaign in Belgium with him.

It is impossible to refrain from thinking that, in times ruled by the dictates of men other than of those of 1804, Masséna would have made a very excellent wine-merchant. As such he would have had innumerable opportunities for exercising his undoubted ability to gain money, and a position of undesired greatness would have forced no obligations on him. He would have been free to pursue a life of undisturbed pleasure, and he would have no cause to display, or to misuse, his enormous talents. He might even have won comparative success in the field of finance. His life, then, in place of a record of battles and titles, would have been an account of personal gains and losses, of small triumphs and of immense enjoyments, for we may be very sure that in whatever state he found himself he would have enjoyed to the full the seeds as well as the fruits of his own labour.

Living as a soldier in the Napoleonic Era, he suffered himself to be used for a purpose that was not his own ; he struggled at the same time

to lead his own life ; and he died an old man, poor, and therefore disappointed in his existence ; unhonoured, which did not trouble him ; unrespected, for which he cared less ; and unloved, for which, perhaps, he grieved.

His last years had in them an element of tragedy. The present departed from him, the future held out no prospect of happiness ; he lived them not only in the past of his career, but in the past of his life.

For a creature so incapable of controlling himself—his instincts, his passions, or his lusts—it was impossible that he could have learned to exercise any means of control over the affairs of other men.

There was a time when, by virtue of his supreme talent in one direction, he could have disputed fame with Napoleon; but to an age that had applauded the one it was impossible that the other, even after his death, could ever become more than simply "Masséna," because he would not himself have cared what name had been inscribed on his tombstone, provided that his coffin had rendered him some degree of comfort.

In addition to calling him his "Dear Child of Victory," Napoleon said of him that his conversation was most appallingly dull.

CHAPTER XXIV

1818

He who seeketh to be eminent among able men hath a great task.
BACON.

TO-DAY in Sweden the reigning sovereign is a Bernadotte. Under the rule of his grandfather, Oscar I, and his father, Oscar II, the country has prospered, as it is to be hoped and expected that under his rule it will continue to prosper.

BERNADOTTE

King Charles XIII of Sweden had died, and was to be succeeded by his adopted son, the Crown Prince Charles John, who was henceforward to be known as Charles XIV, King of Norway and Sweden. On the day of his coronation he had no occasion to remember that he had once been known as the Prince of Ponte Corvo, and once as Marshal Bernadotte, and once—but this was so long ago that he may be forgiven for having forgotten it—as Corporal Bernadotte.

Years !—it would seem to him centuries since he had first run away from his mother's house in Pau and enlisted as a soldier. He had waited eleven years to obtain a lieutenancy, and then in three years he had become a general

of division. He was right if he reflected that such events as these require no dates. He had deserved his success, because he had worked very hard for it ; and on the day that he received the crown of Sweden, he had reason to think that the years had dealt kindly with him, and, with one exception, had yielded him everything that he had desired. He was not yet fifty years of age, and the dark gloss of his hair was scarcely touched with white. Age had not dimmed the fire that leapt from his soul to shine through his eyes. His health was unimpaired. His figure was as splendid as ever. He could call forth the admiration of his subjects, as he had done the first day that he had set foot in their country.

He had played his part in the Napoleonic Wars with characteristic bravery, and as a military commander, intrepid but not imprudent, he had made himself invaluable. If he had suffered from an excess of pride, his defenders had been only too ready to re-christen it an independence of spirit ; if he had suffered from an excess of vanity, it had passed under the First Empire for a natural and well-founded self-confidence. In an age when all men were of necessity courageous, he had been noted as a brave man. To command had been natural to him: he had accepted it as his right and had persuaded others to accept it as such.

" To his subordinates," said Ney, " he showed an unfailing courtesy."

Vandamme, the general whom the other

marshals had found unmanageable, had been submissive to him.

The Swedes had accepted him as their king largely on account of his military capabilities, which they thought might prove useful to them in the event of a war with Russia. Perhaps he had found favour with the women because his little son Oscar was so beautiful to look at. Be that as it may, he had been elected over the heads of many nobler candidates.

In 1810, when the only son of the old king Charles XIII had died, Sweden had resembled Rome in the days when the Roman Emperors had been chosen with disregard to hereditary right, with this difference, that in Rome it had been the sole right of the Emperor to choose his successor, and in Sweden, when the king had been told of his heir he had exclaimed, "Only to think that I should have to take this French corporal for my adopted son!" The candidates put forward for the throne had been Prince Gustavus Vasa, who had supported his own claims; the Prince of Oldenburg, who was supported by Russia; the Duke of Augustenburg, who had been the favourite of King Charles himself; and the King of Denmark, who had been the favourite of no one.

"Sweden," Count Fersen had said, "is lost unless we choose one of the marshals of France."

Napoleon had not committed himself.

There had come then to Paris a young Swedish lieutenant by the name of Karl Otto von Mörner, and, while the Swedish Minister had been dis-

cussing the situation with Napoleon, this young man, entirely on his own initiative, had offered the crown to Bernadotte.

Bernadotte had seen nothing wild in the proposal, and had informed Mörner with all solemnity that he would not refuse it if he were duly elected. On his return to the Swedish frontier Mörner had been placed under arrest for his effrontery, but on the 21st August, 1810, Bernadotte had been elected heir to the Swedish throne. Napoleon had acquiesced in his election, and it had only been his acquiescence that had rendered that election possible.

Before he left Paris, Bernadotte had taken a formal farewell of his brother marshals, and of this occasion Lagerbielke wrote :

" I witnessed a remarkable and touching scene when the marshals of the Empire advanced to say farewell to their former brother-in-arms, whom fate had just raised above them. The Prince himself was deeply moved, and this scene proves how much he is loved by the public and by the Army."

He had played his part in Sweden.

He had ruled for ten years as Crown Prince. To strengthen the position of his country abroad, he had broken with Napoleon, and had joined forces with the Allies against him. He had opposed him at the battle of Leipzig, and to the charge of his allies that he had unduly spared his Swedish troops, he had made the characteristic reply that " he was not in the habit of letting his men be killed unnecessarily." After Waterloo,

when the Emperor had surrendered himself to his enemies, and when his followers were being shamed, exiled, and shot, Bernadotte had retained his position of security. He had made his people, and even his adopted father, proud of him. After his first interview with his "parents" he had said:

"I have gambled, and I believe that I have won."

He had defeated the ends of his arch-enemy, the King of Denmark; he gained the acquisition of Norway, on which he had long set his heart; and now he had become king of the two countries, and the position of his heirs was assured.

Everything that he had desired he had gained —but with one exception. The secret of that exception he endeavoured to keep locked in his own heart. . . .

It was in 1784 that Jean Baptiste Bernadotte left his mother's house to become a soldier. He was determined even then that he would one day be the most-admired man in France.

"Love of glory," said Talleyrand, "can only create a hero; contempt of it creates a great man."

Bernadotte, according to Talleyrand, could rank only as a hero, but he was a hero who desired to be known as the greatest of men. From the first his ambitions opposed his designs. He took part in the German campaign that was fought for the possession of the Rhine, and distinguished himself. He learnt there that a certain general by the name of Bonaparte, who

was six months younger than himself, had been given entire command of the Army of Italy, because of a service that he had rendered the Directory against the mob of Paris.

Bernadotte made no comment on this, but when in 1797 he was sent to reinforce this Bonaparte with 20,000 men, he endeavoured to show by his leadership of them that the soldiers of the Rhine were as well trained and as brave as those of Italy.

He and Bonaparte met for the first time at Padua in the March of that year. All was outward cordiality between them, but in the following year, when General Bonaparte sailed on his Egyptian expedition, General Bernadotte did not accompany him. His private comment on this first meeting had been :

"I have seen a man of twenty-six or seven years of age who assumes the airs of one of fifty ; and he presages anything but good to the Republic."

Bernadotte remained in France ; he became Minister for War ; he resigned and became eligible for election as one of the five Directors of France ; when he heard of Bonaparte's unexpected return and landing at Fréjus, he asked permission to have him arrested as a deserter from his army.

Bonaparte's return from Egypt signalized, as was inevitable, the fall of the Directory, and with its fall fell Bernadotte's chances of ever becoming one of the supreme rulers of France. He had wished to be the greatest of men and found it to

be impossible in the age that had given birth to a Bonaparte.

At the *coup d'état* of the 18th Brumaire, by which Bonaparte made himself master of France, he stood aloof. He made another attempt to become a leader and to be publicly acclaimed. He posed as the protector of Republican liberty, and as the defender of equality. The pose that scarcely convinced himself deceived few others. He was unable to sustain it. After some time spent in hiding from the police spies, who might have been set on by Bonaparte to arrest him for the rebellious attitude he had adopted, he returned to public life and was given employment in La Vendée by the First Consul.

In 1804 Napoleon was crowned Emperor of the French, and Bernadotte became one of the marshals of the Empire.

On the day that the Empire was first proclaimed, Bernadotte said :

" Sire, I thought for a long time that France could not be happy under any but a republican form of government. To the sincerity of this conviction Your Majesty must attribute the conduct which I have pursued for more than three years.

" *Enlightened by experience*, I feel much satisfaction in assuring you that my illusions are dissipated. I beg of you to be persuaded of my eagerness to execute any measures that Your Majesty may prescribe for the good of the country. I, moreover, declare to you, as to all my friends here present, that I share the senti-

ments which General Murat has just delivered to you, in the name of the Army, and that I do in no mere formal or verbal way, but with my heart and soul."

Bonaparte took his hand. After a pause, he said to him :

" General, the firm persuasion which I entertain, that your tongue has always been the faithful interpreter of your heart, renders the avowal which you have had the goodness to make of infinite value to me. It is only by a thorough union that we can hope to complete the glory, tranquillity and prosperity of France. I beg you will henceforth consider me as your friend as well as your Emperor."

To the private circle of his own friends Bernadotte said with some bitterness :

" If I had to choose an Emperor, it would certainly not be Napoleon," and his listeners had no need to enquire of him on whom his choice would have fallen. Curiously enough, Fouché would also have preferred Bernadotte to be Emperor of France.

In the war against Austria, Bernadotte commanded the Saxon contingent. He showed a tendency to give these Saxons more praise than was their due, and Napoleon was roused to say that he was showing preference to foreigners in place of Frenchmen. What he did not realize was that Bernadotte was not wholly French. A large part of his personal bodyguard was composed of Spaniards, and these said, when they looked at him, " He is one of us ! "

In 1805 he was made Prince of Ponte Corvo. In North Germany he distinguished himself greatly and was made Governor of the Hanseatic towns and of Hanover. Napoleon wrote of the man who had served him so well, and whom he had so amply rewarded :

" The vanity of that man is excessive. I have no kind of faith in him. He lends an ear to all the intriguers who inundate the capital. He nearly made me lose the battle of Jena ; he behaved feebly at Wagram ; he was not at Eylau at all, though he might have been present ; and he did not do all he might have done at Austerlitz."

And then occurred the death of the heir to the Swedish throne.

The man who had been capable only of lending an ear to the voices of intriguers had desired to become known as an intriguer.

Napoleon at first ridiculed, and then opposed his election, putting forward the superior claims of Berthier, Davout, and Masséna. Metternich has it that on this occasion he contemplated transferring Murat from Naples to Sweden, Jérôme from Westphalia to Naples, and Louis from Holland to Westphalia.

" Sire," said Bernadotte to him, " would you make me a greater man than yourself, by obliging me to refuse a crown ? "

He had replied with sudden weariness :

" Go, then, and let our destinies be accomplished."

Bernadotte had gone. One of his last memories

of France was that of his brother marshals taking farewell of him. Among them had been Davout, who had been heard to agree with an opinion expressed by his youngest daughter, to the effect that he should be hanged ; Berthier, who had definite reason to dislike him ; Oudinot, against whom he was to be fighting in the May of 1815 ; and Ney, against whom he was to defend Berlin in the August of that same year. . . .

Berthier and Ney were dead now, and Napoleon had been in exile for three years. This was his coronation day, and he was justly to be admired and acclaimed by his people. Behind him lay a life that had been glorious ; before him lay one that would perhaps hold happiness ; and yet for a moment he frowned.

In this man there were bound up two lives that were quite separate and apart from one another : the life that he had lived because of himself, and the life that he had lived in spite of himself.

He remembered the one ambition that had been his when he had left his mother's house so many years ago.

In 1818, when King Charles of Sweden considered the prisoner of St. Helena, he felt a return of the old malady that had tormented General Bernadotte when he had learnt of the first triumph of the commander-in-chief of the Army of Italy ; but while General Bernadotte had thought to find the remedy for that malady in himself, and in the life that he would live,

the conviction was borne to the King of Sweden that it was useless to seek for a thing that did not exist—for a thing that had never existed. To the man of success the conviction brought with it the peculiarly bitter sense of hopelessness that constitutes despair.

CHAPTER XXV

1819

Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents, but that the spirit of the Lord might be made manifest in him.

St. John ix. 3.

In the years that followed immediately after the year of Waterloo, France lost all sense of the present. She looked back on the past with something of terror, and forward to the future with something of relief: but to the present she had no definite reaction. Something had been accomplished; something was about to be accomplished: there were few men who could hope to have a part in both.

In 1819 there were many who could say, "We shall live"; there were none to say, "We live." There were a few who said "We have lived," and to these life was nothing but a prolonged reminiscence.

Sérurier

A man had come to the end of time, and stood at the Gates of Eternity. His thoughts were occupied with the life that he had lived, with the things that he had done, and above all, with the memory of himself that he would leave to posterity.

The coming of death would relieve him of the

weight of seventy-seven years, but he clung strongly to the world and all that it contained. For the last four years he had been living in ashamed obscurity, and he was intensely weary of it. He was weary not of his life, but of his existence.

In his heart there was a sense that he had failed. The reward for his life he had found in the life itself; retribution came to him at his death; the justification of it he was not permitted to see, because he would not have understood it. His thoughts on it were—if such a thing be possible—profoundly superficial.

He knew very well that when his death became known, though there were a few who might remember him severally as marshal of the Empire, as Grand Officer of the Legion of Honour, as Senator and as Count; who might say of him that it was he who had taken L'Autian for the Republic; that he was the general to whom Bonaparte had entrusted the care of the twenty-two flags taken from the enemy at the close of the Italian campaign; that he was the man who, because of his conduct as Governor of Venice in 1797, had been nicknamed "La Vierge d'Italie"; that it was he who had been Military Governor of St. Cloud on the 18th Brumaire, and who because of his services on that day had been rewarded later with the Governorship of the Invalides,—there were many who would only make casual reference to him as one of the very newly created Peers of France, who, like others of his type, had taken the first opportunity of

disgracing himself, and who, after having been deprived of all his posts, had been living for the last four years in retirement.

To-day the name of Sérurier is not one that is widely celebrated, because nothing remains of the man who bore it, more than a hundred years ago, except a few written words, and a small statue that the townspeople of Laon have erected to his memory. During his lifetime he aimed at, and had reason to hope for, a far-reaching recognition; at the moment of his death it would have surprised him to learn that anyone had thought fit to raise to his memory even so humble a tribute as this. His name has no distinctive meaning for us, and that is because his life was typical in all of the life of a generation, and is therefore practically indistinguishable from it. He was, in company with a hundred others, instrumental in bringing about events that he had no power to control or to direct. He may be accounted as a symbol of the Napoleonic Era, and as such his perfection is complete.

He was the child of middle-class parents. He had fought as a soldier of fortune in the Seven Years' War and had thus seen thirty years' service before the outbreak of the Revolution. There is no necessity to detail his career. He had been brilliantly successful. Bonaparte had become attached to him and had written thus of him:

"Severe towards others, he is the same towards himself; he is a rigid upholder of

discipline, of order, and of those virtues most necessary for the maintenance of society."

Lanneauville has left us a picture of him, dressed in his uniform, wearing his cocked hat, and with the star of the Legion of Honour on his breast. About the carriage of the head, the rude cast of features, the broad nose, and the thickness of eyebrow there is something that is reminiscent of Danton; but the expression of passion, dominated by the inner strength of the man, that characterized the features of Danton, is notably absent in those of Sérurier. In him, in place of passion subdued and controlled, there are indications of a natural placidity of mind; the eyes hold an expression of austere benignity rather than of power; and, despite the firm modelling of the chin and the strength apparent in the line of the jaw, there is something of weakness discernible in the set of the full lips—perhaps a hint of indecision.

"Perish our memories, but let the Republic be saved!" Danton had exclaimed in the September of 1792. The man whose memory has perished could never have been guilty of such an exclamation, nor could he have been capable of it.

Sérurier had remained always the soldier of fortune. He had become, in turn, royalist, republican, Bonapartist, and imperialist; and, as long as it had been good for a man to live possessed of a certain, natural, and changeful adaptability of character, he had been successful. But when the easy course of his life had altered,

and when events calling for the making of prompt independent decisions and constancy of purpose had presented themselves, his downfall had become assured.

Such events had occurred in the spring of 1814. In that year and in the year that followed, it became necessary for men to act either with the decisive indecision of a Talleyrand or with the deliberate detachment of a Bernadotte ; but because Bernadottes and Talleyrands were rare in 1814 the story of Sérurier became the story of France. The year 1815 saw the close of a complete phase. The greater part of the men who had given their lives to create that phase became useless to the world after its termination. The peculiar qualities that had been the result of their birth, their training, and the manner of life they had led, which had been indispensable to their own age, had then become valueless. It was necessary that they should be destroyed to make way for a new order of things, and it is strange to see how, in all ignorance, they planned and were the means of carrying out their own destruction. Almost without exception, they acted with a foolishness and rashness that was scarcely credible, and might have been considered intentional, had it not been so profoundly and pathetically unstudied.

When disaster fell on the Empire, Sérurier, in common with all those who saw no other hope of personal salvation before them, voted for the abdication of the Emperor. Napoleon departed for Elba, and Sérurier was created a Peer of

France by the newly reinstated Bourbon Prince, Louis XVIII. Ten months later the Emperor planned and accomplished his return, and France was thrown into a state of confusion.

One would have thought that Napoleon, not content with accomplishing his own destruction, had determined on aiding progress by taking with him those of his companions who might be held responsible for it.

Sérurier, again following the example of many others, immediately deserted his post and, abandoning the cause of the Bourbons, offered his services and allegiance to Napoleon. The Hundred Days had run their appointed course, and at the end of them Sérurier had found himself to be lost, disillusioned, and disgraced. His world accused him ; he understood the fact of the accusation, but its significance escaped him. He had become in turn royalist, republican, Bonapartist, and imperialist. Such were the visible and material points of the circle that he had completed. It was impossible for him to commence it anew ; in other words, it was impossible for him to become again a royalist. The last four years of his life were lived in a state of shame, mingled with that bewilderment that is so often an attitude of shame.

The facts of his life are still before us to-day. What manner of man he was apart from them we have no means of knowing, nor would it be of any great account to us to know, seeing that he only lived the life of a hundred others, was true to the type of a hundred others, and died

the death of a hundred others. But if that is true and one could have asked him, seeing the way the world had treated him, whether he looked from Eternity for a reward, a punishment, or only the consolation of complete oblivion, if anything of the spirit of his age clung to him when he stood at the brink of the grave, he would have been unable to seek an answer to the first, but to the last he would have replied even then: "Is there any consolation to be found in oblivion?"

CHAPTER XXVI

1820

There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the ends thereof are the ways of death.

ECCLESIASTES.

SINCE Waterloo the Bourbons had established themselves with a seeming security on the throne of France. Louis XVIII was himself childless, but his brother, the Comte d'Artois, was not only blessed with children, but had every prospect of being blessed also with grandchildren, as his second son, the Duc de Berri, had recently celebrated his marriage with Caroline Fernande Louise, the eldest daughter of King Francis I of Naples. The Duc was accounted by all who knew him as a pleasant-tempered man whose talents and nobility of mind were in keeping with his ambitions—which is to say, he stood in no very great need of either. After the death of Louis XVIII, the Duc's father was to reign in France as Charles X, and his son, the Comte de Chambord, would also have reigned had not he clung so tenaciously to the theory of the divine right of kings.

PIERRE LOUVEL

On the 20th January, 1793, Louis XVI, King of France, was condemned to death by his

people as guilty of having conspired against the liberty of the nation, and of having violated the public security of the State.

His execution was primarily an act of justice—justice to a people at the expense of a king, justice to the many at the expense of the one. It was conducted openly, without fear and without shame. Said Danton, with the mouth of a people that has gloried always in the sound of its own voice :

" To all the crowned heads of Europe we have thrown down as a challenge the head of a king ! "

One episode alone marred the dignity of the occasion, giving to it a shameful appearance of secrecy and haste. When Louis XVI went forward to speak to his people from the steps of the scaffold, Santerre ordered the drums to beat. There was at this time living near Paris a boy about ten years old who went by the name of Pierre Louvel. The execution of a king was not an everyday event, and even young children might be expected to take a certain interest and find perhaps a certain excitement in it. Pierre may have heard his father speak approvingly of the events of that day. It is possible that he heard repeated the saying of Jean Bon Saint-André, " No free people without a dead tyrant," and that of Lavicompterie, " While the tyrant breathes, liberty is suffocated." He may have heard, but he could not have comprehended, the words of Foussedoire, who said, " I have a horror of human bloodshed, but the blood of a king is not the blood of a man."

In 1804 Louvel was a young man of twenty-one, by profession a saddler and living at Versailles.

In that year Napoleon Bonaparte, who had been named First Consul for life, was contemplating demanding the crown of France. He had reason to believe that it would be yielded to him without reluctance. He was at that time, outwardly at least, successful in everything that he had undertaken; he was admired by his friends, respected by his rivals, and feared by his enemies.

Fouché unmasked to him the members of a plot that had been formed against his life, doubtless at the instigation of the royalists. His consequent action showed that the weakness of irresponsibility that had been an inheritance from his predecessors lay in him, and required only the confirmation of his never-sleeping suspicions to drive him to actions as dangerous to himself as they were essentially futile and destructive.

The royalists had conspired against his life. They should not, he decided, go unpunished; an example must be made. If the true criminal were not forthcoming, a scapegoat must be found.

One was ready to hand. The Duc d'Enghien was at that time living the retired life of a private gentleman within the borders of Germany. On the night of the 20th March, he was forcibly transferred to France, and at Vincennes was surprised by the visitation of a court martial,

who accorded him a hasty and purely nominal form of trial, and sentenced him to be shot immediately by a file of grenadiers. On the previous day Bonaparte had written to Murat, who was then Governor of Paris :

" Let the members of the court martial understand that it must complete its proceedings during the night, and order that the sentence, if, as I cannot doubt, it is a condemnation to death, shall be executed immediately, and the body of the condemned buried in one of the courtyards of the fort."

The execution of the Duc d'Enghien was, as Fouché observed, worse than a crime—it was a blunder. It was an ugly thing, accomplished shamefully and in secret—a thing to be hastily put out of mind and forgotten. But in the mind of Pierre Louvel, which was already darkening, such things as this were not forgotten, because, when their distinct memory had passed from it, their impression remained with him and grew with him.

The immediate and apparent results of the blunder were not disastrous. Two months after it, the Senate proclaimed that by the will of the people Napoleon Bonaparte was to be named Emperor of the French. The people had slain their oppressor and they had been successful. Napoleon had murdered his enemy and he had been successful.

In 1820 Louvel had attained the age of forty, but his brain had become unbalanced.

King Louis XVIII had seen fit to signalize

his return to France by inflicting on the people what has become known as the White Terror. Partisans of Bonaparte and those ancients who still clung to the ideals of a republic had been hunted down and destroyed without mercy. All suggestion of liberal treatment had been ignored or suppressed. The King had been determined to make a demonstration of his majesty and to assure his people of the impossibility of another Hundred Days. The White Terror was in itself a purely reactionary phase and did not last for any length of time ; but the mind of the insane is like a mirror in which things appear distorted.

Pierre Louvel was about to display to the world the great ideals that twenty-five years ago had been fresh in the minds of sane men, when time had wasted them, when they had become decayed and appeared horrible because it was possible for them to exist only in the mind of a madman.

In 1820 the forces that for a quarter of a century had been at work among a people, gathered themselves together, and took possession of a distraught mind. What had been the sanity of the Revolution had become the folly of Bonaparte, and became the insanity of Louvel.

" There is no free people without a dead tyrant."

His brain was capable only of holding purpose ; the elusive meaning of the word " reason " had slipped from it and escaped.

It has not been clearly stated whether he

acted from motives of republicanism or of Bonapartism. It is probable that he himself did not deeply consider the matter. He thought that the job would be an easy one.

"He goes to the Opera . . . there will be a crowd round the door to see him come out . . . when he has got clear of them . . . when the light of the carriages falls on his face . . ."

On the 14th February it might be read in any newspaper that the Duc de Berri, the second son of the Comte d'Artois, had been assassinated as he was conducting his wife to her carriage outside the Paris Opera House. Further, that one Pierre Louvel, a saddler from Versailles, had been arrested for the crime. Louvel, it was stated, had offered no resistance to his arrest, and had persisted in saying that he considered himself justified in murdering the Duc, and that he saw no reason to repent at the success of his attempt. Though clearly nothing but an unprincipled fanatic, inflamed by a false conception of Liberal ideas, it was understood that he would pay the extreme penalty.

CHAPTER XXVII

1821

That which is past is gone and irrecoverable, and wise men have enough to do with things present and to come.

BACON.

NAPOLEON had been in exile for the space of five years, and for the space of five years his influence had been entirely removed from Europe.

The Bourbon King, Louis XVIII, who occupied the throne of France, ruled very much after the fashion of his fathers, and was secure in the approbation of his royal neighbours. Bonapartism was completely out of fashion. The eyes of the world were turned not upon St. Helena, but on Greece, where Lord Byron was later to espouse the cause of the rebels from the Ottoman Empire; on Peru and the Central and South American republics, who were revolting from the domination of Spain; and on Missouri, the first of the United States in which slavery was legally recognized. In 1821 interest centred not on the St. Helena wraith, whose fate was now immaterial, but rather on the figure of James Monroe, the President of the United States, whose message to Congress enunciating the "Monroe Doctrine" was to arouse in Europe a spirit of active controversy.

The Times

THE DEATH-MASK OF NAPOLEON AT THE MILITARY MUSEUM IN THE HÔTEL DES INVALIDES.

Montholon and Bertrand

It was eleven minutes to six, and the evening of the 5th May.

There was a storm over St. Helena which swept the little island, uprooting its trees and profoundly disturbing its existence.

In Longwood House, Count Montholon and Marshal Bertrand stood by the green-curtained camp-bed that Bonaparte had slept on the night of Marengo, and realized that the thing that had so completely ordered their lives, and the lives of their generation, was now without life itself. They could in no sense have accounted themselves to have been his friends, because he had said, "Friendship is an empty word," but he had called them his children. The round eyes of his little son stared at them solemnly and uncomprehendingly from the wall where he had hung his picture, and the flickering light of the candles fell on his grand washhand-stand, with its gold utensils. He had possessed these inanimate things as completely as he had possessed himself of "his children," and, if they wept when they understood that he was dead, it was in a sense fitting that they should do so, because behind each of them lay a life that he, by living, had rendered successful.

Thirty-three years ago both of them had been young men and soldiers of the Republic. On the 18th Brumaire they had declared themselves Bonapartists, and in the December of 1804 they

had been sincere in their avowal of devotion to an Empire.

Each of them had possessed just enough ability to enable him to live well, and to take advantage of opportunity.

After Austerlitz in 1805, Bertrand had become the Emperor's aide-de-camp, and at the battle of Wagram his name had leapt into prominence, because it was he who had devised the construction of the bridges by which the French Army crossed the Danube. In 1813 he had been rewarded for his services with the title of Grand Marshal of the Palace.

Montholon had served the Emperor zealously in all his campaigns, and had furthered at the same time his own interests and advancement. He had distinguished himself at the battle of Aspern-Essling, had been wounded, and at the end of the campaign had found himself with the title of Count.

After the disastrous defeats of the Leipzig campaign, Bertrand had covered the main retreat of the French Army, and had saved it from utter annihilation. After Napoleon's first abdication, Montholon had been one of the few generals who had attempted to rally the troops to a last defence of their capital.

Bertrand had accompanied the Emperor to Elba, witnessed the doubtful triumph of his return, and held a command at the final catastrophe of Waterloo.

In 1815 he and Montholon, with the other voluntary exiles, Gourgaud and Las Cases, had gone

with him to St. Helena, and the life that they had led there, while it had been the means of shutting Napoleon away from all European interest, was to bring upon his exiled companions the notice of the world. . . .

They reflected as they stood by his bedside that they had passed five years of ignominy and of degradation. The greater part of their grievance centred round the Governor of the island, Sir Hudson Lowe. He had been to them a devil in disguise, and the disguise had been thin and most easily penetrated. From the commencement of their sojourn on the island he had succeeded in making himself objectionable. He had insisted on alluding to the Emperor Napoleon as General Bonaparte. He had gone as far as to write him invitations addressed in that style. Nay, more—the declaration that he had requested, or, rather, ordered, each of the St. Helena exiles to sign had run thus :

" I the undersigned, hereby declare that I wish to remain at St. Helena and to share any restrictions that are placed on Bonaparte personally."

It had not surely been the Emperor's fault that such slights had been put upon him. At the start he had been willing to give the Governor every chance. On the occasion of their first meeting he had said in all fairness :

" He is hideous ; he has a villainous countenance ; but we must not decide too hastily. The man's disposition may make amends for the unfortunate impression which his face produces. That is not impossible."

Unhappily, it had proved in this case to be totally impossible. After a very few more meetings with him, the Emperor had been unable to drink the contents of a cup of coffee that he thought the Governor had cast his eyes upon in the course of a conversation.

Sir Hudson had set himself to be deliberately insulting. He was known to have declared that he considered Ali Pasha to be "a much more respectable scoundrel than Bonaparte." Compared with this, what had there been to rouse his ire, in the Emperor's observation that His Excellency was to him reminiscent of a caged hyena? But, not content with mere insult, he had shown himself to be actually hostile.

He had denied his captives "the very necessaries of life." One morning Las Cases' servant had come to tell him that there was neither coffee, milk, nor sugar for breakfast, and when, some hours before dinner, feeling hungry, he had asked for a morsel of bread, he had been informed that there was none. Napoleon had been allowed an insufficient sum of money for the needs of his household, and when he had offered to defray all its expenses himself, using as an intermediary any banking house in St. Helena, London, or Paris, Sir Hudson had refused his consent, saying that he would allow no sealed letters to leave or enter Longwood. Within the course of three months every piece of the Emperor's plate had been broken up and sold, with the exception of a solitary silver-gilt bowl, and Napoleon had been obliged to eat off

the common ware that was extremely distasteful to him.

Not content with such measures as these to ensure the never-ending discomfort of his prisoner, Sir Hudson had denied him even such solace as was afforded him by the presence of the companions of his own choice. In the November of 1816 Las Cases, who had written a letter to Lady Clavering that he had neglected to submit first for the Governor's inspection, had been summarily and brutally arrested, kept in imprisonment with his young son for the space of one month, and then shipped off to the Cape of Good Hope. A letter that Napoleon had written to him in his captivity he had not been permitted to receive. Similarly, in the July of 1818, Dr. O'Meara, the only doctor in whom the Emperor had felt the slightest degree of confidence, had been forced by this " hired assassin " to quit the island, and for some time, despite the condition of his health, the Emperor had been without medical treatment, owing to the fact that no doctor would submit to the restrictions placed on him by the Governor.

Sir Hudson had taken upon himself, too, the duty of censor, and had considered carefully what literature would be suitable for the perusal of his captives. Certain newspapers he had withheld, but the exiles had received such books as *The Secret Amours of Napoleon*, and also *Famous Impostors, or Histories of Many Pitiful Wretches of Low Birth of All Nations, who have Usurped the Office of Emperor, King, or Prince*—the latter accom-

panied by the message that "General Bonaparte" might perhaps find therein some characters resembling himself.

To ensure the impossibility of escape from an island already guarded, Sir Hudson had gone to all lengths. He had blockaded Longwood; he had stationed soldiers at every point; he had planted it round with palisades; he had dug ditches and walled them about with parapets. The household had never for a moment been free from the intruding visits of his commissioners, who had burst in upon them on all occasions, respecting the privacy of the Emperor neither in his bed nor in his bath. In order that he himself might gain a better view of Longwood and its occupants, the Governor had cut down the only tree in the grounds that had afforded the captives the slightest degree of shade. He had cut the Emperor off from all intercourse with the other inhabitants of the island. Everywhere that he had gone, every yard that he had ridden, every step that he had taken, he had been attended by a British soldier, fully armed, and this had so preyed upon his spirits that in the end he had refused to go out at all, and for exercise had been reduced to digging in his little patch of garden. Some goldfish that he had kept had died, and it was with justice and with truth that he had cried out, "Heaven and earth unite to afflict me!"

Enough of such things. He was dead.

It took some little time for Bertrand and Montholon to comprehend the fact that Pro-

metheus had died unliberated from the talons of the vulture. There was a time when they had seen him engage himself with energy in the affairs of Europe. He had engaged himself with the same untiring zest in the affairs of St. Helena, and his followers had lost with him their sense of comparison. He had called forth their admiration as much by his dealings in little matters as in great. His interest in them had been whole-hearted and unassumed, and it was not the first time that his natural adaptability to circumstance had impressed his contemporaries with a sense that his glory was unshatterable. It had occurred to neither of these two to say to him the bitterly mocking " Cum non sis qui furis, non esse cum vibis vivere." He had removed himself from them, but they thought that he would retain his influence over their minds. He left them appalled, not that a great man should have fallen so low in his captivity, but rather that no better tomb might be found for the victor of Austerlitz than the hole they dug for him under the willow trees.

And after they had buried him they became reconciled to the Governor.

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